

69

The True  
RULE, JUDGE, and GUIDE  
Of the true  
**Church of God**

Discovered,  
And borne Testimony unto what it is,  
and wherein it consisteth.

In Opposition  
To the pretended Catholick Church  
of ROME her Rule, Foundation,  
Guide, and Judge.

Being returned in Answer to Captain *Robert*  
*Everard* his Book, titled An Epistle to all the Non-  
conformists, wherein his main Reasons, Grounds, and  
Alligations laid down in his Book are examined and dis-  
coursed with, wherein the faith once delivered unto  
the Saints, is vindicated, and the Doctrine of Christ  
and his Apostles: Against the pretended faith and false  
Doctrines which hath been held forth by the Church  
of *Rome* among Christians as infallible.

By a suffering Member of that Church which fled into the  
Wilderness, when mystery *Babylon* sat as a Queen upon  
the Waters.  
*Francis Howgill.*

---

Printed in the Year 1665.

## Church of God

Discovered

And borne Testimony unto what it is,  
and wherein it consisteth.

In Opposition

To the pretended Catholic Church  
of ROME her Rule, Foundation,  
Guide and Judge.

Being returned in Answer to Captain Rogers  
Examiner of the Book, titled An Right to all the Mon-  
archical, wherein he main Rector, Church, and  
Allignment has done to the Book examined and dis-  
covered, and therein the false and collected un-  
derstanding is vindicated, and the Doctrine of Christ  
and his Apostles is shown the pretended Church and  
Doctors which have been set forth by the Church  
of Rome among Christians as a Right.

By a Learned Member of that Church which fled into the  
Wilderness, when Antichrist & his false Priests were upon  
the Wane.  
Francis Morell.

Printed in the Year 1651.



*The true Rule, Fudge, and guide of the true Church of God  
discovered, and born Testimony unto what it is, and where-  
in it consisteth, &c.*

**A**FTER various reports and upbraidings, and insultings of  
divers men in my hearing, of a certain great pillar and  
a leading man among the Nonconformists, who it was said  
had relinquished his errors, and had conformed; and also  
written and published a Book for the convincement of all others  
to Uniformity and Conformity: also the Weekly Intelligencer  
willing to take advantage sometime when there is little or no oc-  
casion, doth signifie to the whole Nation in his Newes-book of the  
Conversion of a great Nonconformist, for the strengthening and  
supporting of those desires only in People who is willing to make  
shipwrack of all Faith, Hope, Religion, and whatsoever also that  
is of the greatest moment, for a little ease and liberty in the flesh,  
and the imbracement of this present World, is willing to joyne  
with that which is the uppermost, and to sail with wind and tide,  
not minding the Harbour, nor the way which they are passing, but  
only present enjoyment; and such whose faith is builded upon  
men and not upon God; and chuses rather to run with the mul-  
titude to do evil (then with a few despised and afflicted who keep  
faith and a good Conscience) such flashes and airy ungrounded  
rumours stagger'd their mind, and makes them afraid and trou-  
bled when there's no cause. At last this great and magnificent  
piece of Conversion came published in the Newes-book boasted  
on by the Clergy and divers other great Mountains of Earth, came  
to my hand providentially unlooked for, unsought for, or desired,  
which is titled, *An Epistle to the several Congregations of the Non-  
conformists*, subscribed by Captain Robert Everard; as he stiled him-  
self a Member of the *Catholick Church*; which Book hath been  
spread up and down the Counties it seems, as some rare, weighty,  
and great matter to induce others to be of the same mind. But  
why the Members of the Church of England should extoll this

and

and rejoyce in this great Convert I know not, except they have a mind to shake hands with the *Roman Church*, and to receive their Catholick faith so called and unquestionable; but Deceit loves to sport it self, and to make merry and triumph over any who do but relinquish the seeming appearance of truth to turn into the common road of darkness, they hug such a one for a while, and sets him out as an ensign to glory in, and over against others.

After the said Book came to my hand amongst divers others, I was willing to take a survey, and to make inspection into those things contained in it, and to see what demonstrative grounds, and solid and weighty matter was contained in it, which I have diligently weighed, and without a prejudiced spirit read, finding the matter in it chiefly to set up a Council of men to be absolute Judge of all matters of Faith and Doctrine; though never so repugnant unto the Doctrine and practice once delivered and received and walked in by the Saints, setting up this, both above the *holy Spirit of God which is the only and sole trier of all Spirits*; but also above the *Scripture*; wherein I have taken notice his own eye being blinded he would captivate all others, and make them blind also, and lay waste the Spirit of God, and its office the Scriptures, and their translation, making them as uncertain as much as in him lies as the *Turkish Alchabon*; and all solid and weighty arguments and reasons that hath been produced this many years by many godly and moderate Dissenters in divers Ages, from the Church of *Rome*, this he strikes over all by whole sail, labouring to set all a jarr, and to make every thing look with a face contrary way to represent them uncomely; and at last he hath concluded that the Catholick visible Church is the absolute judge and director, both in matters of Faith and Doctrine, without distinguishing of their abiding in the faith, or falling from it, as though the promise of God had been inrailed to a certain place as *Rome*, or to a certain sort of men that may call themselves *Peters* Successors, and Ministers of Christ, though they walk as far wide both in Doctrine and practice as Heaven is from Earth from [*Peter*] and would assume the title of name and office for honour and profits sake, but do none of *Peters* work, feeds not the Flock of Christ, but worries them, and kills them that Christ feeds, and sheares off the Wool from off their backs, and pulls off the skin too, and instead of saving have destroyed hundreds of mens lives in *Europe* and

and *America*; some under the name of Hereticks, and some under the name of Infidels have been most mercilessly and cruelly destroyed by the power of this holy visible Church, as R. E. calls it, as the true Chronologies of Ages past doth testify, so that the Nations have been made like *Akeldoma* by that mystery *Babylon* which hath drunk the blood of the Saints, and slain the Prophets and Martyrs, under the name of Hereticks, quite out of the Doctrine of Christ, and erred from his infallible Spirit, who came not to destroy mens lives but to save them, and to save people from their sins. But this false visible Church hath destroyed their lives under the name of Heresie, and so hath destroyed them in their sins if they count that Heresie be a sin. But of this something more afterwards may be said if God permit.

But it is a great piece of confidence in R. E. that after fifteen Hundred years as he saith this Church hath continued as a Judge and a Director unto, which all Christians are to submit, page 20th. that he that is but a man of yesterday should be so stout a Champion as to make a flourish, and seem to over-ride all the weighty things that hath been spoken by the blessed Martyrs and sufferers for Christ, and Righteous dissenters from this *Roman Church* at one clap; and again to exalt his own feeble things that he hath brought forth and exhibit them so confidently to all *Nonconformists* as unanswerable matter, or how he judged in himself that his reasons or arguments should be of that weight to convince or convert any, seeing he hath rendered himself; and they that know him can testify he hath always been a changable man, and unstable in all his ways, tossed up and down like the Waves of the Sea, and now at last fallen into the black gulf of darkness; but it seems by his own writing in his Epistle, that it hath been his former method, being filled with a scribbling humour in the days of his ignorance, as he saith, when the vail of pride and folly hung between his eyes, which appears to hang there yet, (for any thing I can see) having condemned himself, and also repented as he saith for being in the head of a Troop of the rebellious Army a Captain: and yet after Conversion and illumination and repentance as he saith, subscribes himself, Captain *Robert Everard*; argues both pride and folly, and gives but a small shew of repentance, but rather argues fanciness and flattery, and him to be a time-server, and a man-pleaser.

And

And whether he intend by his Epistle to all the Non-conformists to the Church of England, or all the Non-conformists to the Church of Rome is doubtfull, for then the Church of England hath to conform in part, as well as others, though I believe the Church of Rome will claim a good part of her Discipline to be theirs, only it wants the formality of Language: something might largely be spoken, as in return of answer to the things contained in the Catechism, but that it may be supposed some of those people with whom he hath formerly conversed, which he now calumnates with notorious error, will not receive his Epistle as an infallible and Heavenly Oracle, but rather will return him some publick answer for the vindicating of their own Principles, and also shewing him his weakness, how soon he was turned aside with, and for a thing of nought, and also that he should be so bold as to turn in a moment their Instructor and Teacher, when he hath but newly learned within a year or two the Principles of his own Religion, which he saith he adores God in, and so is but a noyis, and unskilfull in the word of righteousness, though his web be very long of Linse Woolle, and his words be many, which will pass away as wind, and have small effect, I hope of gaining many Profelites, to be Members of that visible Church, which hath ruled over Nations, Kingdoms and Tongues, which are the Waters upon which the great Whore sits.

I take my self little concerned, or that people with whom I am joyned in the fellowship of the Gospel of Christ Jesus, who are Non-conformists to the World, and ever resolves to be, (according to the Apostles Doctrine) and to all Hypocrites and Time-servers, and them that serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, of which this Generation is full, who will transgress for a morsell of Bread, and conform to any thing, and every thing for the smiles of the World, ease and liberty in the flesh, but the followers of Christ hath not so learned Christ, for who so will reign with him, must suffer with him.

Neither should I have said much, if the quarrel had been personal, or about some circumstantial matters, which a Man may be with and without, and they neither add to, nor diminish from his goodness and vertue, but seeing it is a quarrel not only against us that are alive, but against the faithful sufferers, who laid down their lives in flames of Fire, and the very Foundation of God;

181  
God, which is the most sure thing is struck at, and the Spirit of God turned out of doores, in regard of its office, of certainty and infallibility, and the Scriptures of truth laid aside as an insufficient thing, except the Interpretations of Men be added to it for its authority, and the constitutions of fallible and erring Men set up for rules, and Men as Men set up as Law-givers and Judges over Mens Consciences, and Lords over Faith, and to be the most certain thing for any Christian Man to rely upon, and to believe, as the old phrase is, as the Church believes, to pin ones faith upon others sleeves, and to hang ones hope of anothers shoulders, to put ones eye out that God hath given them to see with, and then see by anothers, may be led into any hole or ditch, and this to be published with such confidence, as the only infallible guide, to which all Christians are to submit, would make a Man half dumb to speak and stammer forth some thing as a testimony against such palpable error, and manifest darkness: put off with such confidence, and usher'd in among Christians in such an age as this, when Light and life is broken forth as a morning with out Cloudes in *Goshen*, where *Israel* the true Seed inhabits, I could not but say something in vindication of that certain, true, everlasting truth which the Devil is out of, by which the Saints are made free indeed in their inward man from sin, and Non-conformists to the World, its error, wayes and worship, and also to shew the mistakes of the Author, and how easily he hath been drawn aside to lean upon a broken Reed, all his particulars which are of any weight or moment shall be considered and weighed in the righteous Ballance of equity, and answered in their due place: for the confirmation of them that do believe, and for removing the stumbling blocks out of the way of them that doubt or stagger, least they fall in such dark Pits as these, (*viz.*) as to deny the Spirit of God to be a sufficient guide, and take away its infallibility, and place it in Men that have erred, do erre, and may erre: and call them the only sure infallible guide for all Christian men to follow.

But to speak something to the seeming weighty matter which weighed down R. E. his Judgment, and cast the Scales so far as that all his hope, faith, foundation, & religion was weighed down at one draught, and by such feeble things as put him to silence, which he heard from his Laycatholick, as he calls him, argues a very weak

weak & a poor foundation & a sandy, which was so soon driven away; but one thing is to be minded, because he hath minded it himself of his Conversion, as to matter of time; this Conversion hath happened to fall out since the happy Restauration of our *Gracious Sovereign* to his Crown and Dignity, as he saith; this to some will render his Conversion somewhat suspicious, whether (he name) this time as only accidental, or the Restauration of the *King* the cause somewhat of his Conversion, I shall not determine; but however he having been behind before in Conformity resolved to make a good step to, before the next time to avoid suffering loss and reproach. But to speak a little as to the Discourse which R. E. hath published as the weighty matter whereby he was convinced, their Judgments now it seems becoming one, the *Lay Gentleman* he mentions and himself speaking to one speaks to both.

First, Whether that any can be certain that the *Christians* in general is more true then the *Turkes*, *Jewes*, or any other, and whether any can be infallibly assured of this that it is not possible for one to be mistaken in this; and again the answer amounting to no more then this, you conceive you are in the right, you hope and believe, you are not mistaken; but it is possible you may be mistaken in this, for every *Man* is a *Lyer*, and every *Man* and all Men and every Church is fallible and subject to error; and with these and the like words R. E. was extremely troubled as he saith, and knew not how to answer without shuffling.

*Answer.* The true Christian Religion stands not only in name, nor in words, nor in conforming, or transforming to this or that outward practice, which the Disciples of Christ were exercised in, which divers in the latter days in their old corrupt minds not having their hearts renewed, have taken on the outside, and have got the form, and want the life and the power, and are not partakers of the Divine nature of Christ, and such a bare profession as this has no certainty, nor infallibility in it, neither the assurance but that they may be mistaken and may be subject to err as well as *Turkes* or *Jewes*, or any other, but the true Christian Religion, indeed whom Christ will own as true Worshippers of Him, stands in power, in life, and in being, obedient unto his living commands and precepts, which he giveth forth unto his Disciples, and manifesteth by his Spirit, *his Sheep hear his voice, and know it from the voice of a stranger*: And he giveth the knowledge of his will to  
all



all that believe in the measure of his eternal Spirit, *which he hath given every one a measure of to profit withal*; and by it to be guided into all truth, out of all error, and this Spirit is infallible and gives certain assurance to all that receive it, that they are in that way which is acceptable to God, and they feel comfort unto their souls coming daily from the presence of Christ, who is the Rock of Ages, and the sure foundation upon which his holy Church is founded, *which is the pillar and ground of truth*; and they that are living members are not grounded upon a fallible certainty, or upon a conjectural supposition, or a vain hope which is without bottom, but upon that which is sure and steadfast, lasting and everlasting; and all men in the unregenerate estate are lyers, but they that are born from above are of the truth, and lie not, and are not subject to mistakes, because the seed remains in them, and walks in the pure Religion *which keeps unspotted of the World*; and they that have no other ground for their Religion but only without them, and from the report of others are short of the true foundation, for that may be truth in it self indeed, which is not true to another, nor he truly partakes of it, and here is all the supposing conjectures and mistakes and fallible certainties, which it seems R. E. and his lay Gentleman too, when the axe is laid to the root of the tree indeed, and not withstanding all the laying claim to infallibility and certainty its but grounded upon a report without, and the traditions of men from Generation to Generation; For them that believe but only because of the true report without, and cometh not to witness the thing assured in their own hearts by the Spirit of the Lord, these will not be long of that faith, 'tis true many did believe because of the Apostles Declaration and report, but at last came to feel the witness of God in their own hearts testifying the self same, in so much that they could say and truly too, though we have believed through your words at the first, yet now we have heard him our selves, and that which giveth perfect assurance which admits of no doubts nor fallibleness, for such evidence all true Members of Christ's Church have in themselves, which carries divine authority and satisfaction in it to every particular Believer, and so I say with R. E. in this it seemes unreasonable to perswade any to receive this or that for a truth, when they that so perswade are uncertain in themselves, neither dare say their judgment is infallible, which

is that old Protestant Principle indeed, and also the Principle of many Sects who differs from the pretended Catholick Church of Rome who persecuted one another about outward things even as the Heathen about their Idols, and yet will need sit as Judge in Mens Consciences, with their fallible spirit, though I speak not of every individual person, neither can I justify the Roman Catholick Church so called, who layes claim to infallibility; and whatsoever they judge to be Heresie must be reckoned as such, though never so manifest a truth; and to place infallibility in men that may err and have erred from the spirit, I like not neither; for this is to give that to men that belongs to God, and to make the Judgment of fallible men above the Judgment of the infallible spirit of God; and this I look to be great ambition and pride, in any to lay claim to the greatest things, as infallibility and certainty of assurance, and the most free of error, and yet falls the shortest of it of any, as hath been made appear by many learned, and grave Men of former ages; and also if a necessity were, might be made appear, that the Church of Rome who saith she cannot err, have been as uncertain both in their Doctrine and Worship as any, yea more; one Pope contradicting and throwing down that which another did establish; and one Council decreeing, and another annulling; as I could easily make appear, but that I would not be tedious to the Reader in things that have been so manifest; neither do I desire to wade out into diversity of matters, in so short a Discourse. But that which R. E. and his Catholick instructor calleth late, wild, and loose opinions, that men of different faiths may be saved; and this countenanceth schisme, and breeds rebellion as it is said; 'tis true, faith is but one, which is saving, and there is no difference in that, for the difference is among Men where that is wanting, and only have the words and name of faith, and want the life and power. Neither am I so narrow spirited as R. E. and his Catholick, as to exclude all out of the faith, who may differ in their perswasions in some Circumstantial things, if yet they hold Christ the head: and what makes R. E. so verilent as to judge all in error, and to be out of the true faith, seeing the Protestants and all sorts of separates profess Justification and Salvation, only through faith in Christ Jesus, as well as the Church of Rome; and it were unreasonably judged in me if I should conclude a man to be no man, because he is not so tall as another;



another; but I see R. E. and his Catholick would have all Shoos made by their Last, though they will not fit every mans feet. Faith is the gift of God, there are divers degrees and measures according to the mind and good pleasure of the giver; so that he that hath received any measure or degree, must not be excluded as having no faith, though he attain not to that degree that some do enjoy; and the Apostles Doctrine was, *that every one should be perswaded in his own mind, and if any was otherwise minded, they were to be let alone till God revealed it to them.* And whatsoever people or Church (though they claim infallibility) that teaches a contrary Doctrine unto this; we have good reason to suspect it, to be that hasty driving and overdriving spirit that would force a faith, where God hath not given it; (not to be the infallible spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ) of which the Church of Rome hath given a vehement cause of suspicion, by their cruelty and tortors they have exercised towards them, who could not receive their Principles and own their Judgment in all things: But R. E. the Lay-Gentleman blinded thy eye, when he made thee call into question the truth of Scripture, and that it proceeded from the infallible Testimony of Gods spirit, and if thou had a certain feeling of the same in thy self, and in thy own Conscience to let this go and make this void as an insufficient ground to receive Christianity upon, & to lean to a prop without thee, and to be judged by men, who have been as fallible and changable in their Judgments as the Moon; which have assumed the name of Catholick Church, whose Testimony thy Instructor I perceive told thee, ought to be received, concerning what as is pretended to be revealed or not revealed by God, yet all must be obliged to stand to their Judgment though never so repugnant to the Doctrine of Christ, and practice of the Church of Christ in the first Primitive times, truly so called; yet it is granted that the Church of Christ are the dispersed Members through the World, though not of it, agreeing in one faith, being in the power of God, and being led and guided by the Holy Ghost, their Judgments ought to be received, which cannot (as lead by the Spirit) fail, in giving true Judgment in matters of faith, which pertains to Salvation, but as men they may fail, and as erring from the spirit they may fail; and infallibility is not intailed to the persons of any men, but as they continue in the grace of God, and walk in the spirit, and bring forth the

fruits thereof, nor to any place or City, but as they continue in Covenant with God; for the promise of God was to *Jerusalem*, and *Mount Zion*, and to many other places and people in divers Cities, where the glory of God once appeared, but now through their Apostacy and unbelief, and disobedience they are desolate, as to the presence and power of God, and their Sun is set, and they are covered as with the shadow of a Cloud; but this true Church whereof I have spoken, was seen to *fly into the Wilderness for time, times and a half*, and that since the Apostles days, and then was she not so visible and universal as she had been before; *and the man child was caught up unto God*; now if thou reckon the *Roman Church* to be this true Church; *shew the time, times, and half a time, wherein she fled into the Wilderness*; and how long she hath been there, and when was the time of her return, and if ever she was there, how that will hang together with your assertion, that she hath been visible, and so universal this fifteen hundred years; and if this could be proved that *Rome* hath been so, whether doth it not rather demonstrate her to be the Whore that sat upon the many waters? which waters are Nations, Kindreds, Tongues and People, and what Church? instance if thou can, doth lay claim to the Nations, Kindreds, Tongues and People to be yours, and to rule over so many Kings of the Earth, as you lay claim to be universally of your faith, and of your Church, which gives us a shrewd character to believe, that indeed you are *mystery Babylon*; besides the blood of the Saints that have been shed under the name of *Hereticks*, by this visible Catholick Church among the Nations this twelve 100. years, doth give clear evidence that it can be reckoned or imputed unto none but you. But I would not grate too hard upon thee, being but a new convert; but when thy instructor had made thee doubt of thy own state, and question the foundation whereupon thou hadst received christianity, the next thing he labours to make void, is the Spirit of God its Testimony, which thou did lay claim too, but I feel had little portion in what thou said, at last he makes thee doubt of the infallibility of this spirit wch thou had spoke on, might for ought thou knew be the spirit of error, and thou not able to distinguish betwixt the spirit of God in thy self, which is infallible, and the spirit of error, nor to distinguish betwixt their operations, he perswaded thee that all was uncertain, and therefore no confidence

to be given to any spirit or faith in ones own particular, which is the most absurd and ridiculous thing in the world so to judge: For if there be no certainty or assurance given to any man, or means to every man, wherein he may be assured of the certainty of Gods will, then whither should any go or upon whom should any lean, seeing that no credit can be given to any thing that any man believes; and this were but tossing up and down men from mountain to hill, that they might never have rest for their souls: And as for *Jer. 17.* and *Eccles. 9.* *Rev. 3.* *The heart of man is deceitful, &c.* *No man knows love or hatred, &c.* And because thou sayest *I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, &c.* These Scriptures was brought unto thee to make thee more blind; the first is spoken of the degenerated estate, where deceit bears rule, and not truth; the second is spoken of visible enjoyments, which are common to all; and the third was spoken to one, who had erred from the spirit, and was exalted in pride, because of external performances, but having lost the power was miserable, &c. But what of all this? doth this any whit at all detract from the certainty and assurance of the *Spirit of God in them that have it?* what shall we reason thus because some have been led aside, and are deceived by their own hearts lusts, that therefore all may be deceived, even them that have the spirit of God, (God forbid) and we have somewhat more to answer an *Arian*, a *Jew*, or a *Turk*, if they should urge the like knowledge and feeling with the like confidence, to prove they were in the truth and Christianity, a delusion; and thy instructor said, what would you reply to them?

We have more to reply in such Cases then time will permit now, or the state of the case require; seeing it is but a supposition and we take no thought what to answer the gain-sayers of truth withall, but relies upon the *promise of the Father*, and of *his Son Jesus Christ*, who said to his *Disciples*, *take no thought for it shall be given you what to answer in that day*, which promise all that are true *Disciples* shall find true to the end of the World: but somewhat more we have to say, it may be then thou said when thou suffered thy self to be made blind and carried captive with another Mans Judgment, and neglected the measure of Gods spirit in thy self at home, through which alone the secret things of God is revealed, and in which true certainty and infallibility

is

is witnessed, and not in Men who is fallible and changable. If an *Arian*, *Jew* or *Turk* should urge their own interpretation of Scriptures (which is of no private interpretation) contrary to the mind of him that gave it forth; I would say he perverted the words of the Scripture, which is in harmony and unity one with another, as to the states and conditions they were spoken to, and are plain, and are only read by that spirit that gave them forth: except it be in some Historicall or Chronology or Genealogy of Names and Generations which might be, some gathered from other hands, and different hands taking notice of them as to record them, there might be some variation, yet the substance of the report is true, but what is Calculation of yeares or dayes or reckoning up of Genealogies, as to the matter of Salvation, and what if we had never had them, no more then we have, other Histories and things that fell out among the *Jewes*, but if there be any contradiction for ought I know, we may blame the Church of *Rome* the most of any; who will needs affirm they received all or most of the things from the Apostles; and if the translations differ, or be somewhat uncertain, what have they been doing this fifteen hundred yeares, with their infallible spirit, that they could not have rectified them according to their first original? and if any of the foresaid Sects, should pretend the certainty of the spirit, and yet not have it? I should answer, the spirit is known by its fruits, and the *fruits of the spirit are manifest*, and they that pretend to it, and bring forth contrary fruites, are manifest to be deceivers and deceived, but their states are different, and therefore requires different answers, which time will not now permit to insist upon: but over and beside all other arguments to perswade any man to, or from any thing, the witness of God in the party unto whom he speaketh, is to be reached, and that is beyond the understanding of man, and greater then it, and more convincing then any arguments that can be used without; and he that cannot speak to this, is not skilful in the word of righteousness.

That Christ was an infallible guide, (who is the way, the truth, and the life) is granted by all Christians, and that the Apostles received the promise of the Father, and the infallible spirit of God which led them into all truth, and this infallible assurance the Christians had that lived in the Apostles time, this is granted,

granted, and the Apostles were infallible guides, not as Men meetly, but as Men full of the holy Ghost, and as Men who were filled with the Spirit of God, and therefore the Apostles said, *be followers of us as we are followers of Christ*; and if any controversie did arise, as some there did, and doubts among the then Christians, the Apostles and Elders meeting together in the power of the holy Ghost, did write their mindes and Letters to the Christians to pacify all; and good reason that they that had believed through their word, should submit unto the Holy Ghost, and unto them by whom they were begotten unto God by the word of Life, for the ending of strife about wordes and shadowes and outward things, and they whose mindes were outward then, in ages since and now, ran into contention about outward things, and such for the most part do erre from the spirit of God in themselves, but I would have thee to take notice of this, and all you Catholick Members so called, *the Apostles of Christ only did exhort, and did not force their Decrees by penal Statutes, and to be observed under the penalty of loosing life or limbes*, as since, their pretended successors have done, who have erred from the spirit, and have got the Saints words, and turned against the life and power: but the Decrees, as you call them, are not many nor burdensome, which the Apostles wrote at *Jerusalem*, as the many *Counsels* since have made, they are so endless and numberless and burdensome, and so contradictory one to another in divers things, who will but look into the *Decrees of the Counsels* since the Apostles dayes, that we can find little certainty in any of their Decrees, but rather as thy Instructor saith the Sword of the flesh, and not the spirit hath been the rule and law to Christianity; but the Masters of great wit and power and Interest, have framed and made parties unto themselves, and hath not Warres been raised among your selves about deciding your controversies, hath not the Pope Warred against the *Emperour*, and the *Emperour* against the Pope, was not Wars raised about the Decrees when *Pope Eugenius* was deposed as a Heretick by the Counsel of *Bazill*.--- and one while the Pope must be infallible as *Peter's* Successor, and above all Counsels and Churches, another while the *Counsell* is above the Pope, excommunicates him as a Heretick and excludes his Infallibility, and now where is the certainty, and whether should one go or appeal for true judgment? so, though the Church of *Rome* boast of unity,

unity, yet how hath one Nation made War against another, and yet professing the same faith at divers times and in sundry ages. Add to tell thee plainly, and to speak the naked truth, according to the Apostles prophetic, after their departure there was a great Apostacy, and a great falling away from the faith, and a giving heed to *lying seducing spirits, and doctrine of Devils, and many were subverted from the faith*, by them that spake lies in hypocrisie, and took up the Priests office for filthy lucre, and they went out into the world; and the world wondered after them, and they had the form, and the sheeps cloathing, and the Saints words, but were enemies to the Cross of Christ, and to the power of Godliness; *and the Kings of the Earth were bewitched with their Sorceries*, and then forced all and compelled all to receive and believe such Decrees and such Articles, as was then set forth by a pack of those Hirelings, who minded their own profit, and their own bellies; who mingled their own Inventions and traditions with the Doctrine of Christ, and brought the Scripture for a Cloak, and the Apostles practice for a president, and could say falsely, as the Apostles said in the truth; It seems good to us and the Holy Ghost that these our Decrees be observed, for God hath placed us as Judges and directors, as them that are appointed of God himself. To which, all Christians are to submit and none to question, and if any do question or will not obey, it is the Kings and Princes duty in every Country to cause all to submit to these our Decrees and orders, or else to be punished as Hereticks with death, for we are the Apostles successors, and we are the elders of the Church, and we have the infallible Spirit; and though we make Decrees contrary to what the Apostles made in their day, yet none is to question that, the Church was but in its *Infancy then, as unwash, and unswaddled, and in Persecution*; but now she is grown up to a greater stature and power, and indowed with greater privilege, and that may be necessary now, that was not necessary then; and last of all called themselves the *Clergie*, which signifies the Heritage of God, and so excluded all others but themselves: And these things are true and certain, and have been made good by many sufferers for Christ; and this kind of *Clergie* or Heritage made the Heritage of God indeed, *to fly into the Wilderness, who had the infallible spirit, and the witnesses to prophesie in sackcloth*, and then *Mystery Babylon began to sit a Queen*, and to gild her Cup, and



to fill it full of abomination, and brought in Judaisme and the practise of the Apostles, and their own Inventions, and patched up an endless kind of worship and service, consisting of out-side things in a great part, in postures and gestures, and meates and drinks, and dayes and times, and vestures and Bonnets, and Caps and Coules, and such other like trumpery; which they made the Nations drunk with, and greedy after: and if any scrupled at any of those things or any other, the Holy Catholick Church hath decreed it, and she cannot erre, for she is infallible: though the errors thereof cannot be numbered: and this R. E. thou rests satisfied in as thy only rule and judge and director, and thou hangs all thy faith here, and saith, thou shall not scruple to believe, what authority teacheth thee to be revealed by God, no more then if thou heard God himself speaking; I say unto thee as the Apostle said, the Serpent hath beguiled thee, as it beguiled Eve: and further say, as the Prophet said, thou must arise and get thee hence, for this is not the rest, for thou wilt see thy self plunged into such a layborinth of uncertainties as thou never was before, if the Lord ever open thy eye.

And R. E. gives an account, that after his reading of some contravertal Books, hath made some Collections as to himself, and also declares, that all dissenting judgments grants there must be a way and a rule appointed to teach us, to deside all doubts, to judge of all matters, and to teach us the true way to Heaven with certainty; but who this rule or judge is, is not agreed upon by all; which he hath collected into four heads; First, some sets up the spirit to direct them, and to be this means; Secondly, another will have every mans own natural reason to be this rule and judge; Thirdly, others will set up sole Scripture; and the fourth assigns the Holy Catholick Church to be that Judge and Director: Other then these, he saith, he never heard of any; for he saith, he always esteemed the Quakers Light to be either the Spirit, or Natural reason, (*but which, R. E. doth not know*) and all the four before mentioned, he saith, he hath examined, and treateth largely upon them all; wherein he goeth about and giveth grounds and divers reason, and divers Interpretations of Scriptures; he layes wast all the former three and establiseth as he thinks, the fourth, as to be that way and rule, and Judge, and governing power to deside all doubts as that, whereby all are obliged to sub-

mit unto, as to Christ himself; and this was that question which he was to gain satisfaction in; and therefore he saith, he ceased to enquire of their Doctrine, or this, or that article of faith, and hang altogether upon this point before mentioned.

*Ans.* 'Tis true, it is granted by all, that there must be a way and a rule as the means appointed of God, to answer all doubts, and to give satisfaction to every man, of the certainty of that which he believes; and who this way and judge, and rule is, every one ought to be satisfied; and the four heads into which thou hath collected the whole Controversie of all dissenting Judgments in Christianity takes up the whole as to this particular, which have ordinarily been holden forth among Christians. But I judge thou dealt not wisely in thy Inquisition and search for satisfaction to hing all on this pin, but rather to have examined further as concerning matter of Doctrine, and matters of Faith held forth, most especially of this party, to whom thou was so much inclined; and see how thou could have swallowed down that Doctrine of Purgatory, and sacrifice for the Dead, and Justification by a Man's own works, and of Bread and Wine after the words of Consecration by the Priest is Transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ, and becomes whole God their Saviour and Redeemer; for these are principal things, either greatly necessary to Salvation, or greatly unnecessary; and when thou had tryed and found these to be so repugnant unto the Doctrine and faith, once delivered among the Saints, in the first Plantation of the Gospel, this might have put a stop unto thee, that thou could not so easily close with their judgment and pretended infallibility, who pretends to be only guides, and yet leads into the greatest errors in matters of greatest moment. But as to the four particulars mentioned, I shall not stand to trouble either my self or the Reader, as to speak much what of that which is no part of my faith or judgment, but only to vindicate the truth against the many false conceptions of changable men: And first of all R. E. begins to treat of the spirit, and perverts the Scripture at his first on-set; and saith as touching the spirit bearing witness in secret with our spirits, or as he saith in plainer terms, the private spirit; this saith R. E. I considered could not be the means to convey faith unto the World, nor the rule, guide or judge, which I enquired after, nor indeed the true spirit of God, which he promised to his Apostles.

Secondly,



Secondly, Those who pretend this guidance do not believe God, but themselves only, and their own perswasions, which tell them they have the spirit of God, but they can give no other account, but they are verily perswaded so, or no other answer, but I am sure it is the spirit of God, and I am a good man, and an honest man, and I believe my self, but other reasons or evidence can they give none. Thirdly, This pretending of a private spirit is against 2 Pet. 1. 20, *That no prophesie of Scripture is of private interpretation.*

*Answer.* This Man beats all together beside the Anvil, what ever the matter is, but that he is blinded and confounded in himself, he sets but up a shadow, and then fights with it; for instead of proving the Spirit of God not to be a competent rule, judge and guide, and instructor in all matters of Faith necessary to Salvation; he goes about to prove a private spirit, a pretended spirit, a spirit of error is not a sufficient guide and Judge; and in this he fights without an adversary, and fills the world with noise and darkness, and the air with smok, and would cloud peoples understandings with multitudes of words that tend not to edification, with a quareling wrangling spirit, which is not for peace; but I see he hath delighted in contention, and sported it self in varience, and like the son of the bond-woman, his hand against every man. Secondly, I wonder why R. E. quotes so much Scripture as for the prooffe of his matter in hand, seeing that it is one of his great pleas, that it is insufficient as to be a rule, or a guide, or a judge as to answer any doubts, or give any satisfactory solution to him that is enquiring; and seeing he hath given in so many reasons against it, as insufficient, and as much as in him lay to invaluade and set it at nought, and hath laboured to set it at oddes, and to make contradictions in it, as to render it insufficient for matter of probation in any thing, which is in controversie, or how he can judge, that others should receive them; and his sometimes false rendering of them, or his own interpretations upon them, seeing he denies them as uncertain, as they are translated and insufficient, and not fit to be a rule; and who this man hath conversed with I know not, that should ever affirm a private spirit or their own spirits to be a sufficient rule or guide to walk by, such I deny and leave them and thee, to quarel together about your imaginations and thoughts, and conceptions, or else the conceptions of other men who are as uncertain and fallible as the

first, and shall assert the sufficiency of the spirit of God teaching, ruling, guiding and judging all true Christian men in that certain, everlasting, infallible truth, which is necessary and satisfaction to the souls of all them that do believe in it, and shall deny all the pretenders to it, who run into heaps and heads, and quarels, and fights one with another about shadows, and can give no other account or manifestation; then, I am sure I have the spirit of God, and I ought to be believed, and I am a good man, and the like, which thou saith thou could never receive any other evidence or testimony, and what though many have pretended to the spirit, and the guidance thereof, and in the mean while have brought forth the fruits of the flesh and their own imaginary false conceptions, and hath put on confidence enough to say so, as thou thy self it may be hath had a share in, in times past, shall this make the Spirit of God insufficient and uncertain in its teachings to them that believe in it, and have received and bring forth the fruits of it, and have the deeds of the flesh mortified by it, God forbid.

Thirdly, Why hast thou perverted the Scripture, as I said at the first onset, *Rom. 8. 16. The Spirit it self bears witness with our spirits that we are the Children of God*; and this thou hath put in, in a distinct Character to be taken notice of, as though it were Scripture, and renders it thus, *the Spirit being witness in secret with our spirits, or in plainer termes the private spirit*: Thou must repent of this, and take heed how thou calls the spirit of God a private spirit, for it was that *publick spirit* which manifested it self among all the Patriarks and Prophets, and by which they spoke forth the words and mind of God unto the people, and prophesied of things to come; and through it alone is the deep and weighty things of God revealed; and was and is the only way and means by which Christ promised after his Ascension to lead, guide, instruct and comfort his Disciples in all truth, and that it should bring to their memory whatsoever he had spoken, & that they were to be without care or thought, for through it the Father should give them what to speak and what to answer before Rulers and Councils for his Names sake. And here the sufficiency of it is proved to any reasonable man who hath the least favour or discerning of the things of God, and this is that *publick spirit* by which the Apostles published the Everlasting Gospel of peace, and which Christ the head of the Body (*his Church*) had received without measure; and this is a private, twyning, creeping spirit of thine, who hath been

been lost in thy own imaginations, and following thy own forward rash spirit, and hath found no certainty in thy self of Gods spirit to stay thy mind upon, nor no patience to wait upon it, but reaching & grasping at things in thy dark mind, & last of all hath brought in thy verdict for the devil against the sufficiency of the holy spirit of God, its guidance amongst his people in the later days; & that is thy fond conception as to say, that the Spirit of God is expressly against the 2. of Pet. 1: 20. which thou calls a private spirit all along; *'tis true no prophecie of Scripture is of private interpretation, but the holy Men of God spoke in forth as they were moved by the holy spirit, which was publick and conversant among them, with them and in them; and they that have it, can receive them as they are written, and can read them, and understand them as they were spoken, and doth see the intent of the Holy Ghost in so speaking unto different states and conditions, notwithstanding the many Copies thou tells on, and diversions and different translations which thou would make a great Mountain on, and raise it up so high to make the Scripture uncertain and low, as not fit to be taken notice on, as to answer any doubt, or to be any rule or guide, or any example or president for any thing that I can perceive by the course of thy Spirit, which in the truth is fathomed and comprehended, though it is as uncertain as the way of a Serpent upon a Rock, yet they that have the spirit of God sees beyond all, and hath unity with the words and minds of the Spirit of God, notwithstanding the many corruptions and defects in translations, and the many foul hands it hath passed through.*

Fourthly, The spirit of Christ is the gift of God; which he giveth unto all that wait for his appearance, and his Sheep have it, and they that are Christs have it, for *they that have not the spirit of Christ is none of his, and it is that which is every way sufficient (and no way insufficient) and it is every way sufficient to lead into all truth, according unto Christs promise, and to convince the World of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: again, it is that which Christ promised for a director, which was with them when they healed the Sick, and cast out Devils, and which was in them to console them and comfort them in the midst of affliction; as it did Peter and John, and made them bold who were yet illiterate Men, and had not that sufficiency, which many looks upon*

upon now they have, to wit natural Tongues and Languages, yet it was sufficient in them, to give them wisdom to declare the things of the Kingdome of God, to the salvation of many that did believe through their words, it was sufficient to comfort Paul and Silas when they were shut in the inner Room, and their Feet fast in the Stocks, when there was no outward cause of joy but rather of sorrow, yet they were made to sing and rejoyce because of the great comfort and joy that the spirit of God filled their hearts with again, it was sufficient in the midst of great conflicts and tribulations which Paul and the rest suffered for the Gospel's sake and for Christs sake, and yet as suffering did abound it was sufficient to make consolation to superabound, to ballance the suffering and to make it easie.

Fifthly, It is that everlasting Covenant, which the Lord promised by the mouth of his Prophets in former dayes, that he would fulfill in the latter dayes or after times; that he would write his Law in their hearts and put his spirit in their inward parts, and that they should not teach every Man his neighbour, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest: and again in another place, I will power upon them the spirit of prayer, and supplication, and they shall see him whom they have pierced, &c. and again, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and my Sons and my Daughters shall prophesie, &c. and this was fulfilled at Pentecost in Jerusalem, when the Disciples met together, and the promise of the Father came to be fulfilled, and the Unbelievers said they were filled with new Wine, and the Lord hath a care of his people through ages, and hath not left them comfortless, nor without a guide, and a certain and a sure one too; which spirit is manifest among some Non-conformists, whom thou takes liberty to call Sects, and the sufficiency of it is witnessed (praised be the Lord) in our Assemblies, both as to convince, to convert, to save, to judge, to guide, to instruct, to comfort; and is that alone in which all true Christian men can worship God, in the silence of all flesh, and fleshly motions and thoughts, it's that, that giveth assurance also, of acceptance with God, and is that which makes the Prayers of the Saints as sweet incense in the Nostrils of the Lord; it is that which makes the words of him like Butter, as pleasant as Honey, or sweet Oyle; who speaks by it, through it, and from it, whereby the hearts of many hath been pricked, and the thoughts

thoughts of many hearts: hath been revealed; and many hath been comforted with joy unspeakable, and filled with pure love; from the sensible feeling of the sufficiency of its power, operating in the inward Man; even as when the harvest had been gathered in, and the Press full of Grapes, and the Vattres had over-flowen with abundance; so that they could have rejoiced and sung and danced for joy, as sometimes David did; when the Ark of God was brought from the House of Obed-Edom, and placed in Jerusalem, when David danced for joy, and all Israel was filled with gladness; what might I say for the certainty, sufficiency and all-sufficiency of this holy spirit of God; I might fill my mouth with arguments, and time might fail me in speech, to speak of the excellency, certainty and infallibility thereof, against all opposers and quarellers: In a word it is that alone meanes; through which God conveys eternal life to all man kind, and it is that rule by which all the Sons of God were led, Rom. 8. 14. It is that only sure Guide, Judge, Way, Rule, in which there is certainty and assurance of the love of God to Man kind; it is that by which the deeds of the flesh are mortified, and Men quickned and enlivened unto God in their hearts, in which the Saints are accepted, by which they are regenerated, and through which they become Heires of the promise: what shall I say but this, let all flesh be confounded before it, and all deceit stop its mouth, and all the sons of Men bow before it, all Councils and Churches, all Rulers and Elders, all Reason and Comprehension, all Words and Writing of Men; and holy Men, yea of the Scriptures of truth, it gave them all a being, it was, it is, and is to come, and will remain when all visible things are past away, it is that by which God will plead with all flesh, and bring a Consumption upon all the honourable of the Earth, and burn up the Mountains, and make the hills to melt, and make all a plain before Him; therefore make room, make room, make way ye postheards, and cease all your contending and babling, and bow to it, and learn of it in your hearts, (which R. E. like an ignorant man calls a private spirit) that your souls may be saved in the day of the Lord, and you may escape his wrath which is to come against all resisters of it.

Sixthly, Your Catholick Church, falsely so called, who hath erred from the spirit, the infallible Guide, (though you much boast of it) both in doctrine and practise abundantly; inasmuch that

that your faces seem altogether to look another way, and your course to arive at another Haven, then the Apostles and all the primitive Christians attained unto; to wit *everlasting Happiness and rest for their souls*, and acceptation with God in their performances and sacrifices, which they offered unto him in the spirit, of which they and all that believe in it, and have received it, received perfect assurance in their hearts, by the immediate spirit of God; and likewise the Protestants in general, whether *Lutherins* or *Calvins*, or other Sects known by denomination, are of so narrow and a *pinching spirit*, as that you would *pinch* and *shut up* the universal love of God unto all Mankind, into a *narrow corner*; and monopolise the free grace of God that hath appeared to all Men, that teaches all men that receives it, to deny all Heresie, falshood, opinions and humours, private spirits, and spirits of error, which leadeth from all these, and is sufficient to lead out of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to do that which is acceptable in the sight of God, and this all sects, (*since the Woman clothed with the Sun fled into the Wilderness*, viz. *the true Church*;) and all parties hath laid claim to, and excluded all others that were not of their opinion, as from having any share in it, as though it were given only to such a company of men that succeeded the Apostles, and by arts and parts, and natural Language in the course and term of years, and at such and such places, as the Apostles were sometime conversant at, and other sects besides you, who have kept more nearer in Conformity, in Doctrine and Worship, and unto the Apostles then you have done, they have laid claim to the spirit of God, and to the free Grace of God, only extending it self to them under such a qualification; as though the Spirit of God, and free and saving Grace of God, had come by Generation, or by succession, or because of such, and such a qualification or conformity in outward practice as I said, as though the free Grace of God and the infallible Spirit of God, had been given to you, and had been bequeathed and intailed to you, or any of you, under such and such a denomination, and because inhabiting at such a place, and thus you would limit the holy one of *Israel*, and to stop the wind to blow where it listeth, and circumscribe the *infallible means* which God hath given unto all Mankind for a *direction* and a *guide*, a *rule*, and a *judge*, and pinch it up into a narrow corner, and yet shut up all under condemnation, who do not believe, and yet



yet exclude all but your selves, from the sufficient meanes and guide, and way; whereby they may believe: away, away, with this *narrow, partial, pinching spirit*; for God will not be limited, neither can be, either to Men, time, or place; but as they keep in Covenant with him, and keeps their first love and integrity, in the certain truth revealed in the first publication of the Gospel; which the *Roman Church* above all other hath wonderfully apostatised from, especially in this one thing, which she can never clear her self of; to wit *Persecution*, in taking away the lives of many, under the name of Hereticks, and suppose any had been so, as doubtless there are such; yet we never read, that it was Christ or the Apostles way to *kill them and destroy them*, but on the contrary denied them, and warned others to beware of them, and to have no fellowship with them, and so left them to the World, neither that they exhorted or stirred up, either Kings or Princes to take away the lives of any, who did believe or not believe what as they declared to be truth; but on the contrary, when the Disciples in the days of their infancy would have *commanded fire to have come down from Heaven (as did Elias)* Christ rebuked them and told them they knew not what spirit they were of; and again love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you: How your Catholic Church hath kept this precept I leave all Nations to judge, where your power hath been known; suppose real *Schismatics* and *Hereticks* as some such there hath been in the world, how you have done good to them, and how you have loved them is manifest, except you judge that shutting them up in Prisons, racking, torturing, and cruel torments, and at last of all death, was in love to them, and in doing good to them, which methinks any reasonable man should blush and be ashamed to think or say.

But an old Plea comes to my mind, which some of the members of the Church of *Rome* hath alledged to me in the days of my youth, when I was conversant with them, and among them, in a friendly, neighbourly, and sober discourse, of things of this nature before mentioned; it was said unto me, the *Roman Catholic Church* is that Church whereby Christianity hath been conveyed to all Nations, and the great Oracles thereof delivered unto us, and the Scriptures also came from us, by which you know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, and the knowledg thereof came unto all, and all her Children ought to be subject unto her,

as the true mother that brought them all forth, and if any went astray either into Heresie, or Schisme, which might not only hurt themselves, but also others; ought not the Mother in natural love to her Children to correct them, and ought not they to bear her correction, and submit unto it; and hath not she power to correct her Children when they go astray? unto which is answered, Christianity that which is truly such, and them whom God will own to be Christians was dispersed through the Nations by the power of God; and we say, that the Church of Rome hath begotten Christendom into that mould and frame into which they are now cast, more by force and awe then any sound Doctrine; and as for the Scriptures coming from her, that we deny; We know they came from the Apostles, and from the Primitive Christians, according to the will of God, and have been preserved to this day, though through many polluted hands they have come; and we know how much your rage was kindled, that ever it should be Translated into the *English Tongue*, and many felt the effect of it to the loss of their Lives, as I hope many in *England* doth well consider: But suppose a true Mother have many Children, and suppose some do swerve and go astray from her precepts, and under pretence of correcting of them she shut them up in Goals, and nasty holes, and afflict them with sundry kind of torments, and at last of all kill them and destroy them; what Judgment will be given by reasonable Men of such a Mother, but this, that she is become unnatural and cruel, and hard hearted, and degenerated from the nature of a loving and tender Mother, and deserves not to have or ever to have had any Children; and such a kind of Mother hath your Church been, to all that have dissented from her; that I may say of her as the Prophet *Jeremiah* said, (especially in these latter ages) the *Sea Monsters and Dragons of the Wilderness draw out their breasts to feed their young ones, but the daughter of my people is become cruel.*

Seventhly and lastly, We know that God willeth that all Men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and hath given that, and doth give that unto every man that is come into the World, whereby every man that doth receive it is capable of fulfilling the will of God, and this gift comes not by the will of Man, nor is received in the will of Man, but in its own will even in the will of the giver, and this free gift of God is the free and saving



*saving Grace of God which hath appeared unto all Men; to wit, every man that is come into the World, which teaches all the Saints, and would teach all Infidels to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and to live godly and righteously, and soberly, in this present evil world. Howbeit all are not so taught, because they heed it not, and because they receive it not, and so they make the free gift of God of no effect, (as to life to them) but it is their condemnation; yet how ever herein appears the equal, merciful and universal love of God, who is no respecter of persons, but hath distributed a measure of this unto all to the intent that they might have power to fulfill his will, and keep his Statutes, and so the fault is not in God but in them, who slight and despise his gift, and so condemnation is just of every one that doth not believe, and is of himself, and this reprehends that false, erroneous, narrow, pinching spirit, which would shut it up in a corner, and tie it to one sort of Men, or Sect, or opinion, and the masters thereof would assume it to themselves, as though the Spirit of God and Grace of God were only among them, and must be conveyed from them, to other people before they have it, and the direction and guide of every man must be sought from their mouths, as though God had not given a measure of his Spirit unto every man to profit withal; and to be led and taught, and guided by it into all truth, out of error, according to Christs promise, and according to the Lords promise in the days of old; that though his people might eat the bread of adversity, and drink the water of affliction, yet their teacher should not be removed into a corner; and from this quickning, enlightening, enlivening spirit of God, the Saints of God, and Ministers of Christ in the Primitive times received power and authority to propagate Righteousness, and to judge deceit, and the mystery of Iniquity, where ever it appeared, and in this their ability stood; for they were made able and fit Ministers by it, not of the Letter, nor of Mens traditions; nor of foolish fopperies, which hath been introduced since, and shuffled in among Christians under the name of power and authority of the holy Church, and the Church of God that had received this spirit walked in it, and brought forth the fruits of it, whereby they were a good savour in the nostrils of the Lord, and by which they adorned the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, by a holy Conversation, which did manifest them to be of God, and convince and stop the mouths of gain-sayers. And thus we are bold*

124 to tell thee & all, that the Spirit of God which is given a measure of it to every man, and more fulness of it to them that believe, that it is the rule, and the way, and the means, whereby all the actions, words, and works of all Men are weighed, tryed, measured, and judged, and *Objections answered*, and is the alone Judge of all matters, and answerer of all doubts, and giveth only true and perfect satisfaction; and therefore R. E. may blush and be ashamed to ever publish such a thing abroad in the World, as to say, that the Spirit of God is not a sufficient director, teacher and Judge, but calls it a private spirit, opinion, humour and fancy; to make the eyes of them blind who wait for its appearance, only to trust to Men who pleads antiquity and power, without verity: And further he goes on and sayes in 22th. page of his said Epistle, There is neither Jew, Turk, Pagan, or Christian but he may put on confidence enough, affirming that he is taught by the spirit of God, many of all sorts doth this and yet teach contradictions; and further saith, that it hath no effect among them who pretend to it, and that they can no more satisfie another, that they are guided by the spirit of truth then many who are cast into Bedlam.

*Answer.* 'Tis true, many are confident and impudent enough, but confidence without ground, and impudence proves but little, and he that saith he is a Jew and is not, but of the Synagogue of Satan will soon be found out by his Doctrine and fruits, and he that saith he is a Christian and led by the Spirit, and keeps not the commands of Christ, neither brings forth the fruits of the spirit, is soon discovered to be a deceiver, and deceived, and such are like to teach contradictions, but all such are denyed, shut out with the spirit of truth, but them that have the spirit of God, witness a blessed effect among them, for they are turned from Satans power unto God, and doth witness remission of sin and reconciliation with God, and are not at difference, but at unity one with another, and are brought out of the obstinate and perverse estate which all pretenders are in, and as for contradictions they are more to be seen in the Church of Rome then many wheres else; they who are but pleased and hath leisure to view over the Decrees and Constitutions of several Popes and Councils, since he was elevated to be Universal Bishop over all Christian Churches, by that heathen and cruel Emperor Phocas, who slew his Master Mauritius to obtain the Empire, he did gratifie the Pope so far that he might be cryed up

as Emperour, as that he should be *Universal Bishop*, and this proved a better plea for the Pope (because the Emperour had power to defend him, and to compell all to receive his *Decrees*) then that he was *Peters Successor*; I say who will but look into the Constitutions and Decrees shall find such *setting up* and *throwing down*, and such *decreeing*, and such *disannulling*, as twenty such Champions as *Robert Everard* will never be able to free his Catholick Church from contradictions, although he is very forward to charge others; though he is but a new Convert, but let him not boast till he have put off his armour, and it is that mad *Bedlam* spirit of chine that saith, that among all the Nonconformists there is no one that can satisfie another, that he hath the spirit of God; I tell thee yes, there are *thousands satisfied in one* another that they have the spirit of God, besides he that hath it can speak to the witness of God in another which shall testifie the same, and moreover their *works* and *fruits* shall and doth manifest unto others, that they are *born of the spirit*, because the fruits of it are seen, as they are manifest to be born of God that do the *works of God*; and thou must first know the spirit of God in thy self (if ever thou look for it there, and not hang all together upon others belief as thou doth upon thy Catholick Church) before thou can know it in another, and first be convinced by it and judged by it, for thy ill deeds and ill thoughts and hypocrisie, and time-serving, and flattery, and men pleasing, before thou can be convinced of others Righteousness, and also be convinced of the *unbelief* of thy own heart before thou can believe others; but thou hath been so busie abroad in quareling and contending about words and names, and empty shews without substance and life, that thy mind is all over grown with *thorns* and *briers*, scrawling and scratching, and entangling thy self and others; so that, that which should favour the things of God is over grown in these, and its buried, and to them that are like *heaths in a desert*, knows not when good comes, neither doth know what they enjoy that dwell in the *fat Vallies*, and the *Pharisees* had such unbelieving hearts, though Christ was the express *Image* of God, and did the works that never man did, yet being without faith and without reason, they said, he was a *Blasphemer*, and all his works was done by *Belzebug*, and would never be convinced that any thing he did was of God, and that spirit is near thee which would represent the fruits of the Spirit to be delusion,

126

delusion, and them that bring them forth like them in *Bedlam*; and what though *Turks, Jews, Pagans, Mahomet*, and the false *Christians* do pretend to the spirit and guidance by it, and yet bring forth the fruits of the flesh, doth this make the spirit of God void? or the certainty of it to them that believe, or do make their fruits of none effect, God forbid, thy ignorance is manifest; but here thou ceases not, thy tongue being thy own, and thou being at liberty, and speaks thy own words, which in the end shall become thy burden.

Thou vapours and vaunts over them, to wit all the *Nonconformists*, and saith, what can you say for your selves any of you, which these *Embusiasts* who have gone before you to maintain their errors, but the rule and judge, and then thou concludes that which God hath appointed to be rule and judge to all the world, and capable of being known and heard by all, and cannot contradict it self, nor must be contradicted by any, under pain of damnation; if you cannot shew it to have been your rule you ought to lay aside your folly, as destructive to humane society, and them that hath pretended the spirit, the strongest party, and sword, upon the vote will prove it self the most convincing spirit, and force the weaker spirits to submit or cry, for thou concludes the *Nonconformists* have no other Testimony to try your contradicting spirits in matters of greatest moment, but force and success, if you have I pray you inform me what it is.

*Ans.* If the wind had not turned into another door, divers *Nonconformists* believes we should have had another song from thee, if time had but favoured thee so far as to have granted thee the privilege of thy Troop to be Captain, which name thou holds up yet i'th pride of thy heart, though thou have lost thy force, success, and pay, which was the greatest plea when time was with thee, and not long since too, which makes thee measure every Man's foot by thy Last, and thou might have received information before thou had made a conclusion, had been the part of a wise man, before thou had set thy self as Judge over all thy former fellowships, which thou fainedly pretends so great love to; and before thou had discovered their nakedness (if it be nakedness) to all the world in such a publick insulting bravado as this, like *Goliath of Gath*, and as for what some *Nonconformists* both to the Church of *Rome*, and to the Church of *England* too, which thou creeping and

*sneakingly*

*sneakingly flatters*, and saith its established, and therefore thou wilt not meddle, thou might have said, *dare not*, for thy spirit is well enough seen by them, only to have the spirit of a *slave*, and not a free member of the true Church of God, and its no part of *virtue*, nor *honour*, for thee to insult and glory over them, who are in *suffering* and *adversity*, when as thou dare not meddle with them who are as contrary to thee as the former, this is but the spirit of a *Coward*, and is *ignoble and base*, and ever so to be accounted by all the Children of Light, who dare put all to venture which they do enjoy on this side of *Immortality*, and to suffer the loss of all visible things for their Testimony, and the truth which they believe, and for bearing witness against that, which is contrary unto their faith, as did the valiant Primitive Christians of old, and that which some *Nonconformists* can say, is more then thou can believe, although demonstrated in the evidence of the spirit of God, with sound reason, and evident example from the Scriptures of truth, and though thou and thy former fellowships then, and thy new fellowships now, have made this vapour, which for ought I know might lay your hands upon your mouths, all considering what *contradictory Doctrines and fruits* hath been brought forth since the night of Apostacy entered in, and *all the World wondered after the Beast*; some hath this to say, he that pretends to the Spirit, and the thing cometh not to pass that they speak or prophesie let him be accounted a *false Prophet*; again, they that pretend guidance of the spirit as some formerly have done, and yet bring forth the fruits of the flesh as variance, hatred, emulation, strife, contention, heresie, false Doctrine, persecution, force and violence, let them be counted (as truly they are) *deceivers and deluders*, which have gone out into the world, and deceived a great part of Mankind, of which *Rome* hath not had the least share, clear it when thou can; Moreover, he that pretends to have the spirit of God and layes down another foundation to *build upon*, in matter of *Faith*, in matter of *Rule*, in matter of *Judgment*, in matter of *Doctrine*, then that which the Lord of Life and Glory hath laid down, he is a *Deceiver*, and an *Antichrist*; but R. E. hath laid down another rule, another way, another Judge, another foundation for Faith, and let himself make the Conclusion if he once dare joine to true Judgment, *other Foundation can none lay then that which is already laid*, to wit, *Christ Jesus, the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles*,  
and

and of the Church of God, by which they were all builded up as a holy Habitation for God to dwell in through the Spirit: Again, the Apostle saith, *All Judgment is committed to the Son both in Heaven and Earth*; and again he saith himself, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and none can come to the Father but by me*; and again, the Spirit of Truth shall lead and direct his Disciples into all truth; and sealeth unto them their Justification, Redemption and Salvation: And this R. E. would lay all wast and void; and why? because many hath pretended to it, and hath fallen short; therefore all the aforesaid things must belaid aside as uncertain, and not to be trusted unto; and a certain sort of Men called the Apostles Successors who have sought their gain and worldly Interest, and to enlarge their Dominions, and to make themselves Lords over Mens faith, and over Mens Consciences, whatsoever they say though never so contradictory to the Primitive Doctrine, delivered in Christ and the Apostles days, yet all must be received upon pain of Damnation, as R. E. saith; and this he calls the Visible Church, and the infallible Judge, and Rule, and Director, and hath laid wast the Office of Christ, and turned the spirit out of doors, and made it ineffectual, and would perswade all others to look to this from the true Foundation, and so is a Deceiver and an Antichrist. Again, we have this to say, he that teaches a contrary Doctrine then that which was once delivered unto the Saints is a Deceiver and deceived (and this was Christs Doctrine once delivered unto the Saints) *Swear not at all, and love your enemies, pray for them that persecute you, do good to them that hate you*: And many more precepts which this visible Guide, to wit, the Roman Church holds not, but hath made void; First it teacheth its Members to swear, and again gives absolutions to remit them of their Oath if she think fit, and both must be reckoned infallible, and them that are your enemies instead of praying for them, you curse them; and instead of doing good to them, you hate them, and stirs up all your strength against them to destroy them, instead of convincing of them in love and sound judgment; Instance the days of King John, and divers other Princes, which felt your fury and wrath; and also Frederick the Emperour after he was Interdicted, was made to go to Rome to before the Popes Palace, and to stand bare foot and bare leg, with his Wife and Child two or three days in Winter, waiting for Peters Successor, his Absolution: But it may



may be thou wilt say, this was in love to them, and in charity to their souls; but let all unbyassed spirits judge, and whether have not you when you have been the strongest party, made force, violence and success your greatest engine and plea, to plead with all Nations, and whatsoever people that dissented from you either in matter or form; instance *Germany, Bohemia, Moravia*, and divers other Kingdoms and Provinces; besides the *Indians in America*, which you destroyed chiefly for their Gold and Treasure under this pretence, that they were Infidels, and forced a faith upon some, and a belief by the violence of your cruelty and swords, which made the Noble Man of *India* say, he had rather go to Hell with the Infidels of *America*, as you called them, then to Heaven with the *Spaniards*, so cruel a people, members of your Catholick Church, what might I speak of the King of *Castile* against the poor *Moors of Grandia*, who were put to cruel torments by force and violence, which is a reproach upon this sort of Christianity unto this day, and what persecution was raised against the *Peddamount Christians*, by the force of this infallible Judg, falsely so called; and what Massacres in *France*, and also in *Ireland* in latter years, propagated by the *Popes Nuncio*, a chief Embassadour from the *Roman Sea*, to carry on that design to root out the *Hereticks*, what destruction of people, in a most barbarous, inhumane, preposterous and prodigious cruelty, some killed in the their beds, some knocked in the head like Oxen, some stripped naked in cold winter and bereaved of all their enjoyments, and driven as sheep naked to the shambles, and at last driven by scores into Lakes and Rivers, and drowned, some burned alive in their Houses, some tender women strangled in Childbed, and their tender Infants taken from their Mothers breasts and tossed upon Spears points; and to my knowledg license and pardons given and sent from *Rome* to divers of their Emissaries there, that it should be lawful for any servant or Catholick bondman to steal, waite and purloyn their Masters Goods if *Hereticks*, for the weakening and disenabling of them to resist the *Roman* enterprise begun; these things and many more are legable in bloody Characters, which I hope this Generation will not easily blot out of their memories, so as to commit all faith, all hope, all religion, and all infallibility and judgment, to such a degenerated Generation, as *R.E.* would have us do, and with such audaciousness is not ashamed

to blow his trumpet as in the head of an host to animate and encourage all to come to this black Standard for *protection*, and *direction*, *judgment*, *certainity*, and *infallibility*, under no less then pain of *Damnation*; and why but because *Peter* was sometime Bishop of *Rome* as they say, and had given unto him the *Keyes* of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever he bound on Earth was bound in Heaven, and whatsoever he loosed on Earth, was loosed in Heaven; and because *Christ* said, (giying answer to *Peters* faith) upon this *Rock* I will build my Church; therefore all the *Bishops* and *Popes* as heires apparent succeeds him, in laying claim to headship, and doth none of his office, nor none of his work, and this foolish foppery and private interpretation hath been put off at a very great rate, for Catholick Doctrine, which brings to my mind a pleasant story, I have sometime read of a certain poor Man meeting a certain Bishop at a certain time, in great pomp and glory, which the poor Man beholding, took up a Laughter, and being enquired of by the Bishop wherefore he laughed? said he, that *Peter* should be such a fool as to live such a poor miserable life as he did, and persecuted in the world, and to leave his Successors so rich, to inherit such pomp and glory: with that the Bishop replied and said, Thou fool, I am not in this glory as I am Bishop of such a place, but as I am Duke of such a place: at that the Man smiled again, and said, When the Duke was in Hell for his pride, where then would the Bishop be. But to let this pass I am sure them that layes claim to be *Peters* Successors as to *Patrimony* and *Riches* (which he was never endowed with, for sometime he said, *Silver or Gold have I none*) but doth little of his work in converting of souls, or feeding of the flock of *Christ* and doth lay claim unto his privilege and power, but will not come near him in *Doctrine*, *labour* and *suffering* for his Members; and therefore I say to thee in thy own words, lay aside thy folly, with the consequences of it, as destructive to the Church of God, to hang all their faith upon such uncertainties, but even to humane societies, which I have mentioned, and might instance more, but that I would not be tedious to the Reader.

Lastly, Yes, some have some other Testimony by which spirits are tryed and may be tryed to be of God, otherwise then by force, carnal sword, a strong party, or success, that's thy own and not ours; we have the holy *Unction* which is poured forth, whereby the



the Saints know all things, and tryed the spirits, whether they were of God or no, and he that confesses not Christ come in the flesh is Antichrist; and he that confesses that Christ is come in the flesh only, in words, and because others hath said so, and doth not witness *sin* condemned in the flesh, and turned from, and to have power over it, the same is a false witness, and is an Antichrist also, and also we have other things to try spirits by, we know a proud, angry, hasty, perverse spirit, is not the spirit of God; a persecuting, Lording Spirit, is not the spirit of God; and again they that teach a contrary Doctrine, to the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, they have the spirit of error; again, they whose practice and conversation is not suitable to the practice and conversations of Christ and the Apostles and Primitive Christians, that they are in the spirit of error; again, they that would force a faith by any humane constitution or law which is repugnant to the Law of God, or by force of the sword or any carnal weapons, they have the spirit of error; for the weapons of the Lamb and his Followers are not carnal weapons, but spiritual, and yet mighty through God to the beating down of the strong holds of wickedness; and to prevail over the Powers of darkness: again, the Testimony of God in every mans Conscience, which is an unerring Testimony, this favours the things of God, and by this the things that be not of God are discerned, and this will put a perfect difference between the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error; but what can be said to a man in unbelief that hath closed his eyes.

The next thing which R. E. saith he consider'd, was, that the Natural reason of every man could not possibly be rule and judge, that I sought for; for saith he, if reason were to be rule and judge, then it would follow contrary to Scripture, that it is not impossible to please God without faith, and it would likewise follow that every Religion would be truth, consequently contradictions would be true, consequently there would be many Religions and no faith at all, for reason excludes faith, as in the 26. page of his Book.

Thy tongue is thy own, and thou art at liberty, and goes whether thou wilt, & speaks what seems good in thy own eyes, & hath never yet known another to gird thee and lead thee whether thou wouldst not, I stand not to vindicate every mans Judgment, neither to prove other mens conceptions, but seeing thou hath taken in

hand to lay all Mountains waite afore thee that stands in thy ways, thou hast raised up some in thy discourse for others to stumble at, and hath spoken many false things, without distinguishing and putting a difference between Light and darkness, between Natural reason and Spiritual reason, I could not chuse but say somewhat.

Although it is no part of my belief, that the Natural reason of any man or every man is able to be rule, judge, and guide to any man in the things of God, yet faith is not in opposition unto pure reason, neither is pure and spiritual reason in opposition to true faith, but in harmony with it, and one with another, as they are the gifts of God; but the Natural reason of all the fallen sons of Adam is corrupted, and is too short, and too narrow, too cross, and too perverse, as to be rule and judge in the things of God, for the Natural man by all his endowments in the transgression perceives not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned, and the things of God that are spiritual and eternal are above the reach of Natural reason, and yet thy consequence is false, for faith doth not exclude pure reason, and faith doth not make blind the understanding, but enlightens it; and though it is impossible to please God without faith, yet it is impossible that, that faith should be without reason, the Apostle desired to be delivered from unreasonable men that had not faith, so it is manifest they that have faith have reason, and them that have no faith are unreasonable, and where thou hast borrowed this rule I know not, *that a man must believe that which he doth not understand*, seeing the Apostle saith to the Romans, *even of the Gentiles*, who had not the Law nor the Scriptures, that, *that which may be known of God was manifest in them*; for by that it is manifest they understood the mind of God and knew him; for Paul saith further, *when they knew God they glorified him not as God, but were unthankful, &c.* and again, *he that believes must know that God is*; for none can believe in that which is not, for to perswade any to believe in uncertainties, which is not manifest in the understanding, doth rather beget unbelief and doubting then true faith, but thy paths are so full of darkness I shall not traduce them, and thy consequences is false, for pure reason teaches not contradictions, neither doth teach that there is no faith at all, neither is faith excluded by pure reason, as thou ignorantly saith in the 26. page; and is it not reason that

133

[ 35 ]

that I should believe in him, whom I know is the Creator and Governour of all the World, and pure Religion is so far from excluding faith, that they that have true faith have reason, and stands not in opposition to faith, but this I conclude, that the reason of fallen men is corrupted, and is an uncertain thing to rely upon, and so not a competent Judge in matters of so high concernment, as touching everlasting Salvation.

The third thing which thou treats upon, is against them who have pleaded that the sole Scriptures are sufficient of themselves to teach true faith from time to time, to direct, rule and govern us, and to be rule and judge, and to supply the place of Christ and the Apostles,

As I said, it is not my intencion to vindicate other mens quarrels, which is no part of my faith, notwithstanding I should be sorry, but that every thing had its true *weight* and *measure*, and shall not in the least detract from the price, value and true worth of the words of truth, to wit the Scriptures of truth, which were spoken forth by the spirit of truth, and by the holy Ghost, as it gave utterance, but as men erring in their judgments, runs sometimes to the right hand, and sometimes to the left hand, and walks not in a straight path, some men are setting them up above that which they were intended for, and placing them in the stead of *God*, *Christ*, and the *Spirit*, and others are too much debasing them and disesteeming them, as that they would set up the Judgment of *variable* and *changable men*, who hold and teach things in contradiction to the Scriptures, and repugnant to the mind of the spirit in them that spoke them forth.

But first of all, I say not against thee in this thing, that the sole or whole Scriptures are not sufficient of themselves to teach true faith, and give the knowledge of God without the spirit, for many have got the words, and yet hath not received the spirit, nor the power which the Scriptures declare of, such wrangles and contents with the words, and opposes the life and the power; the *Jews* had the Scriptures, and knew by them where Christ should be born, and knew by them what his works should be, when he was manifest, and yet rejected him, unto whom all the Prophets bore witness, from *Moses* to *Samuel*, and from him to *John*, and they were never intended by God, as to be set up as *Judge*, and *Guide*, to wit the words without the power and Spirit of God;  
yet

yet notwithstanding, though I cannot set them up in the place of God and Christ, and the Spirit, nor contend ignorantly as some have done, that they are the author of true faith, and that they are the eternal word of God, which the world was made by, that they are the light, and the way, the truth and the life, and that they are the desider of all Controversies, and sole, and absolute, and only Judge of all matters of faith, and of all matters that ever hath been, or ever shall be in controversie to the end of the World without the spirit of God; neither am I of that ignorant mind as some are, that the Letter and the Spirit is inseparable, as that whosoever hath the Scripture must needs have the Spirit, or whosoever hath the Scripture must needs be infallible without the Spirit, all that are of the aforesaid Judgment are but wranglers for the most part about words, and contenders against the power of God and godliness, and brings the words to oppose the life, and them that have the spirit and walk in it, for a Natural man may read the Scriptures and yet not perceive the things of God, neither perceive the mind of the spirit, but wrest to their own destruction, as Peter saith, because they are unlearned & untaught (*by the spirits teaching,*) though otherwise learned enough in Languages, Tongues and Speeches.

Secondly, Yet I cannot detract from them, neither undervalue them, or disesteem them as uncertain, or of no use, or of little use, but what ever themselves declare themselves to be, that I own them to be, to wit, *the Words of God, the words of Christ, the words of the holy Prophets and Patriarkes, and Apostles,* who were endued with the Holy Ghost, and spake forth the Scripture as they were moved thereby, in several ages of several things, and unto several states and conditions, as they were led thereunto by the *holy Spirit*, and they are a certain declaration of things that were done and believed, and practised by the *Jewes* under the first Covenant, and by the Apostles and Primitive Christians in the *New Covenant*, and contain many precious and holy precepts and commands, doctrines, examples, exhortations, admonitions, reproofs and instructions; and are as lively examples and holy patterns for all the Saints in light to follow, by which we are given to understand what Faith, what Hope, what Patience, what Love, what mercy, what long sufferings, what consolation, and what vertue, and what inheritance the Saints in light were made partakers of, through faith in Christ Jesus: Likewise, what *Doctrines* were held

held forth, and what *practice* they used in the *Primitive* times, when they walked in the order of the Gospel, and had fellowship with God the Father, and the Son, and one with another in the light of the Gospel, which is the power of God, through which they witnessed Salvation and remission of sins, and published it unto others that they might believe.

Thirdly, The Scriptures testifies of Christ, and were written that they might be believed, and received, and read, that there by every one that believed might be made wise to Salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3. and instructed in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished with all good works, and whosoever doth teach any Doctrines contrary unto the holy Men of God, who spake as they were moved by the spirit of God which dwelt in them, the Scriptures are witnesses against such, that they have not the Spirit of God, but are led by another spirit which brings forth contrary Doctrine, and another faith then once was delivered among the Saints, and whosoever brings in, sets up other precepts, constitutions, orders, and practices in point of *Worships in opposition and contrary unto those practices which were held forth in the Primitive times*; and would set up other Traditions then the Apostles delivered either by word or writing, such are manifest to have the spirit of error, and are innovaters and bringers in of other things, as necessary in point of Worship among Christians, which the Apostles and Ministers of Christ did not see necessary then, and yet they wanted no part of the Council of God, for Paul said, *he had declared the whole Council of God*; and further more they said, we have the mind of Christ, and Christs mind is not variable.

Fourthly, Though divers of the Writings of the Prophets and Apostles be lost doubtless, as is evident by divers places of Scripture, yet blessed be God that there are those preserved which do bear witness of the one thing *absolutely necessary unto Salvation*, and of the Ministrations that were appointed of the Lord for the Church of God to observe, both in the first and second Covenants; so that Christians of this last age are not left without example and president, which all ought to have an eye unto, and a diligent regard, and though there be divers Coppies of that which is called the Original Tongues, and divers Translations, yet he unto whom the Spirit of God is given, and waiteth in the measure of Christs Light,

Light shall receive it, doth see and shall see the mind and will of God in every age, and the mind and intent of the spirit in them that spoke forth the Scripture, and can receive the matter therein contained, as though they had heard them speak, that spoke it at the first, and though the Translators were Men, yet I have such an honourable esteem of their labour, that I believe they have not varied wittingly and willingly from the best Coppies that was extant in their age, neither that they were altogether void of the Spirit of God in such a good work, which conduced to the benefit of Mankind, but were assisted by it, for so good a work, and there be many figures and tropes, improprieties of speech, mysteries and difficulties, yet all these comes to be made easie and plain to them that are witnesses of the same spirit that gave them forth, and though there be diversity of judgments and professions of Religion, one clashing again another, and thwarting another, and contradicting another, and all will seem to bring the Scripture for their prooffe, which yet cannot maintain and prove every thing good, especially when their Doctrines contradict one another: This is granted, it is only their private interpretation, and not the Scripture; and for want of that Spirit that gave it forth, for that alone gives the true understanding of it, and they that are without this are like to kill one another about *words and names, and sounds, and titles, and jotz,* but still wants the key that opens, and gives an entrance into the knowledg of the things of God, which alone is the Spirit of God that gave forth the Scriptures.

Last of all, R. E. after he saith the three former props which is the basis of the whole foundation, and glided over as sleightily as he possible could, although he hath never stated the matter right, indeed as to remove all things out of his way, which might hinder him in his cause which he drives so hard on in, to wit, to set up a certain company or multitude of men visible and universal, as he saith to be the only infallible Judge to convey Faith to the World, and to be the certain and infallible Judge in all matters, that either pertaines to the Worship of God, and to be believed under pain of Damnation, as his term is all along, without questioning at all either their Doctrine or Principles, or comparing them with the Doctrine of Christ or Primitive Christians, whether they be true or false, whether they be with or against, but all is to be received by an implisite faith, hand over head, and  
by



by whole sail, for it will admit of no examination nor doubt, but all must be received of necessity as infallible, and upon so great a necessity to, as R. E. saith, if you will believe him, would make it so, that all forfeits eternal Salvation for not receiving all the Doctrines of this Church, and consequently procures eternal damnation unto themselves who refuse it; so that if I should say no more, but even lay down his assertions which are scattered up and down his Book, called an *Epistle to all Nonconformists*, it were answer enough I hope to many, whose mouthes I hope would be filled with arguments, and sound and grounded ones too, or at least with faith in their hearts to oppugn, and not receive all these bold assertions without examination or trial, only upon the account of infallibility from the Universal Church of Rome, falsely so called; but R. E. having removed away all the stumbling blocks which is in his way, as he judges, the *private spirit* he hath concluded not to be this rule and judge, which I judge he hath no opposers in, though he have spent much paper and time in his scribbling humour, which hath been his manner in former days, as he confesseth page the first; neither *reason*, nor the *Scriptures*, are this rule and judge, but he hath concluded the *Catholick Church* is, but all along he hath waved that which indeed is the only and alone rule and judge infallible, viz. *the Spirit of God*; but either calls it the *private spirit*, or concludes it is intailed upon the Church, so that she cannot erre, page the 54. which I shall say something further unto.

That there hath been a Church of God, and a peculiar people whom God hath singled out, as to be objects of his love, which feared him in their hearts, and bore a Testimony of him, and worshipped him according to the manifestation of his Spirit unto them, whether by word or revelation, which was certain and infallible unto them that received it, is granted, and this was alwaies but little in comparison of the multitude of the fallen Sons of Adam, and the rest of the Nations and people that served and worshipped strange Gods, and never made such a boast of universality and visibility as this supposed Catholick Church hath done since the Apostacy entered in, which the Apostles foresaw and prophesied off before their departure out of this Tabernacle, and since, many have believed in Christ, and the *Worship of the Jewes* extinguished, and a fatal overthrow of their Civil Government and

*Kingdom*, are two main reasons of extinguishing their Worship, and hath been no invitation to any to turn *Jewes*, or holden in their worship, seeing they have lost their Government and Dominion, and are as scattered people without privilege, and is no inducement for the World to joyne to them; therefore seeing the face of that Government was demolished, and their Worship ended, but only as to themselves, who remained in their unbelief, and seeing that the Doctrine of Christ did so far prevail as to extinguish it, and put out the Glory thereof in the Apostles dayes, and sometime afterwards, and also the Gentiles Worship, and their false Gods and dumb Idols, which they were led after, the power of God prevailing through the Apostles, the Ministers of Righteousness, by whom many were converted unto the Faith of Christ, the *summe and substance of all shadows*, many being converted to the Faith, did hold forth a publick Testimony, and it became in some reputation, and many preached him of envy, contention and strife, and for filthy lucre, covetousness and self-ends, and many followed their pernicious wayes, and yet held the name of Christ and Christianity, and thus began the mystery of Iniquity to work, and the Devil to turn so far Christian in name, (only) because it was in vain among many to hold forth the *Jewes* Worship, or the *Gentiles* Worship, because they had an inclination another way after Christianity, that came into more repute with the World, and therefore suffered the name or many to profess it, and under this name, and under this Cover, to bring forth his works of darkness, and the fruits of the flesh, and the nature of Christ wanting, and here was the beginning and rise of your universal visible Church.

Secondly, For the first two thousand years before the Scriptures were written, R. E. saith, the Church of God was this rule and judge and infallible director, which might to some indifferent man have been granted, but that I see which way his course bends, viz. to the setting up of Men as judge, and rule, and guide, and detracts from the *Spirit and power of God*, in which the ability and power of the Church of God stood, and from which alone they received this proper power & right, because their understandings were enlightened, and their judgments informed to declare the mind of God freely, according as it was revealed, and to give true judgment, why is not this attributed rather to the *spirit and power*

power of God that was manifest in them, rather then to persons, seeing their ability stood, and their power only as they kept in Covenant with God, and as any erred from that in any age, or fell from that, they came to be blind guides, and to give false judgment, as some such there were in all ages.

Thirdly, R. E. saith, that after the Scripture was written the Church of the *Jewes* was rule and judge unto the *Jewes*, & cites *Deu. 17. 8. Thou shalt come to the Priests, Levites, & unto the Judge and enquire, and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment, and according to that which they shall tell thee thou shalt do.* And likewise he quotes, *Mat. 23. 2, 3. The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses Chair, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, &c.* And from thence he infers, would God direct them unto, and punish with death for not obeying an authority which might deceive them, and was this authority committed to them that was capable of mistaking.

*Ans.* It seems R. E. would narrow and pinch up the Church of God among the *Jewes* in a straight compass, when he would confine it only to the Priests and Levites, and to the Judges in those days, when as all the Tribes were called the Church as well as *Levy*; again it is said, *Jacob is my portion, and Israel is the Lot of my Inheritance*, comprising the whole Tribes and Families of the *Jewes*, but it seems these must be no part of the Church with R. E. he pinches narrower now then he will do when he tells us of the vastness of the universal Church; but let that pass as by the way, and to come to the matter in hand; the Priests and Levites were appointed by the express Commandements of God, as to be Ministers unto him, and to Minister unto the people, according to that Covenant that he made in those days, and the Priests and Levites were endowed with the Spirit from God, suitable to the Ministry and charge committed to them, and they were figures of Christ the Everlasting High Priest, and the Law and Judgment which was given by the Lord to Moses, was delivered to the Priests and their Lips were to preserve Knowledge; and good reason, because they were committed unto them, and the Tables of stone and the Commandements were not given to the Families and the rest of the Tribes, and as R. E. hath answered himself, neither could sufficient Coppies have been written in any reasonable time to every particular Tribe, Family, or person, and therefore R. E. concludes

full too hastily, but that his spirit indeed is byassed all along in his discourse to aime toward the mark he would be at, to set up Men above the Spirit, Scripture and Reason; but I enquire of R. E. whether that the Priests and Levites, and Judge did tell them any other thing, or direct them in any other way, or gave judgment after any other manner then as was written in the *Tables of Stone*, or the *Book of the Law*, which was written; wherein the mind of God was contained both in point of *Worship*, and also in point of *Government*; and why might not R. E. as well and reasonably have concluded that, that which was given from the mouth of the Lord concerning all *Israel*, was the direction, rule and guide, and judge, as well as the Priests and Levites, and the reason that the people or the Church having recourse to their Ministers appointed of God, was, because they had the Statutes and Ordinances of God committed unto them; which was put in the Ark of the Covenant, and in the Tabernacle; and by the way I would ask R. E. or any of his *Roman Catholicks* a question, seeing he saith, that this promise is granted and intailed unto the Church (without all limitation or condition) as to be the only infallible rule, and that they cannot err; whether that these Priests and Levites ever did err, yea or nay? and when was the entail cut off from them? seeing the Scripture saith, they had violated his Law, and broken his Covenant; and again the Prophets prophesied for hire, and the Priests bore rule by their means, and the Judges judged for rewardes; and as *David* and *Paul* saith concerning *Israel*, *They are all gone out of the way, and there is not one that doth good, no not one*; and whether were they the rule and true guides, and judges in this revolted estate, yea or nay? although I do not question but they retained still their places by way of office, and would claim the same power which they had before from God, as they stood in the commands of God, as R. E. and his Catholicks do, and will lay claim to the office and power the Apostles had, though they do err from the spirit the Apostles were in; and whether their power of being directors, guiders and true judges, and infallible rule, stood not upon this condition, as they did continue in the Covenant of God, and kept the Precepts of God in purity without violation, which when they did not, (as sometimes they did not) whether were they subject to err, or whether did they err, yea or nay? viz. the Priests and Levites, Judges, and heads of the

the people which R. E. reckons for the Church; and though Christ did exhort his Disciples to hear the Scribes and Pharisees who sat in *Moses Chair*, and to observe and do those things which they from the Law before given, read and taught, and instructed the people in, because as I said before the Law and the Statutes was committed to the Priests and Levites, and they to read it, and minister unto the people, by the appointment of God; and these Statutes and Ordinances were the rule that the then Church ought to have observed, yet Christ exhorted the Disciples to beware of their Leaven, and of their hypocrisy, and said, *they said and did not*, notwithstanding all the authority which R. E. saith they had; and further saith, would God direct them unto, and punish with death for not obeying an authority which might deceive them, or would Christ command the doing of whatsoever should be done by an authority that was capable of mistaking; all which makes nothing for R. E. but rather would run him upon a harder Rock, if this should be true or granted, for then he is bound both to believe and justify the Scribes and Pharisees in whatsoever they did or said, of which methinks R. E. should be ashamed of; 'tis true they that sat in *Moses Chair* could not err nor be deceived, nor be capable of mistaking, as they continued to keep unviolate the Ordinances, Statutes and rule, which was given unto them by the command of God, but when they disobeyed and set up the Traditions of Men, and mingled them with the *Ordinance of God*, and neglected the weighty matters of the Law, as *Justice and true Judgment*; both they that taught, and they that were taught, came justly under reproof; and seeing R. E. reckons that the authority of the *Jewes*, Scribes and Pharisees could not be deceived nor capable of mistaking, only because they bear the name of such an authority and office; I query of R. E. again whether the Scribes and Pharisees were not mistaken, yea or nay? and whether they were not deceived, yea or nay? and wherefore Christ should exhort his Disciples to take heed of them, and to beware of them, and to take heed of their Doctrine? and why did Christ pronounce so many woes against them, notwithstanding their sitting in *Moses Chair*? but in what hath been said I hope will be sufficient to convince any, that what R. E. hath laid down for a seeming foundation makes altogether against himself, the premises before well considered: And as for all thy Collections  
 out

out of the Prophets of the promise of God to his Church, *Isaiah* 54. and 56. and of its indowments and glory, and excellency, and of his putting his spirit in them, and of his word in their mounthes; and that it should not depart from the seed, nor the seeds seed for ever; this is granted, and the promise is not to Men as Men; but to the seed which is not many but one, but *Israel* was this true Church then in the time of this Prophecie, though it have relation to future ages also; and if R. E. looks that this promise should be to *Israel* after the flesh, the Church then visible and in being, he mistakes himself, and he egregiously errs, and contradicts the Scripture in sundry places, which saith, your house is left unto you desolate, their Sacrifices ceased, the Glory of God departed from them; *their Prophets prophesied a divination of their own brain, and their visions were as visions of the night*, and the Lord spake not to the most of them, yet they said falsely thus saith the Lord, in their revolted estate, for they were erred from the spirit and gone from the seed, and joyned to another seed, and *their holy flesh was departed from them*, though as men they had the same flesh still, go learn what that means; and yet notwithstanding all this, the promise of God was not violated, neither unfulfilled on Gods part; for the promise was not then, neither now is to Natural Generations, or that which is born after the flesh, or to men as men, and Creatures, but as they are the seed, and as they are Men of God, and as they are born again and new Creatures; and if thou wilt have an intailing here it is intailed, which cannot be cut off, for the Covenant stands not to Men in such a place that carries the name of Office or Authority, but as they are led by the Spirit the infallible Judge, rule or guide, as they walk by this, and in this, they cannot err, and they erring from this, they are subject to be deceived, and to be mistaken in all things, and every thing, of which there is evident examples in the Scriptures of truth in divers ages, of them that professed themselves members of the Church of God, and so visible as R. E. speaks of, yea, and the greater part too, that have erred, and their paths hath been reckoned by the Lord as *crooked and perverse, and their Habitants full of cruelty*, and this is given for an instance, the visible Church of the *Jewes* did err and go aside, notwithstanding all the promise of God to them, and as they looked that it still belonged to them, because they were invisible profession, though they had turned their backs upon the Lord,



Lord, and their hearts too, and violated his Covenant, yet still as I said, the promise of God and the Covenant of God is not made of none effect, nor broken on Gods part, but stands with the seed for ever, *who are circumcised in heart, and who worshipes God in spirit and truth, and in uprightness of heart, and hath no confidence in the flesh,* nor fleshly privileges, nor external performances, but only trusts unto the gift of Righteousness manifest in them, *by which Justification comes upon all that believes,* and the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, and the fulness of the promise of God; but these things I know though they be holy, faithful, and true, are a sealed Book, and hid from all eyes living in the flesh, who hath not been baptised into the death and suffering of Christ.

Fourthly, That Christ by his own mouth and the mouthes of the Apostles, did promise that there should be a Church which the Gates of Hell should not prevail against, and this Church was established upon the Everlasting Foundation, and the Rock of Ages, and was indued with power from an high, and with a great measure of the spirit of God according unto Christ's promise, which more plentifully was poured forth after Christs departure, and after his Ascension, and great gifts were given unto them, the word of Knowledge, the word of Wisdom, the Interpretation of Tongues, & the gift of Tongues, the gift of Prophecie, the gift of discerning Spirits, healing the sick, working of Miracles, &c. and all these foresaid gifts were given for the work of the Ministry, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, and unto a perfect man, and to the measure and stature of the fulness of Christ, Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13. And all these were instrumental (through the Spirit of God which was with them and in them, the only means) to bear witness unto those things that they had learned and believed, and to publish the word of faith abroad unto the World: and for all these foresaid ends above mentioned, which though R. E. and his Catholicks will need lay claim to the succession by way of office, yet by their Doctrine denies in part the very end wherefore such gifts were given, to wit the Doctrine of Purgatory, for if they did perfect the Saints, or were brought up to the knowledge of the Son of God, and to perfect men in Christ Jesus, and to be without sin, what need had there been of raising up this damnable Doctrine out of the pit, to purge from sin after they be dead, seeing

ing they were to be perfect men while they were alive, and the Ministry was given for this end; but yours it seems cannot have these effects on this side of the Grave, and therefore they must perfect them in the grave, and so be Ministers in another World: And this Church thus gathered and endued before mentioned, with the infallible Spirit of God, if any that did sometime believe and were joyued unto it, did walk disorderly, as not becoming the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, they were to be admonished and exhorted, and if they persisted in their disorder, it was to be told to the Church, or the whole body, and if such a one would not hear the Church, he was to be reckoned as a Publican, or a Heathen, and to be denied as to have any fellowship with him till manifest repentance was shewn, but we never read that this Church did shed any mans blood, or burn any, or give consent to destroy any, instance if thou can, though obstinate and Hereticks too; and in this amongst many other things the spirit of your Church is seen to be contrary to the Primitive Church, and you out of Christs Doctrine; but R. E. argues further and saith, but if Christ by his Spirit doth not preserve this Church from all possibility of teaching error instead of truth; I may receive such errors as may damn me; unto which I say, Christ by his spirit doth preserve this Church from all possibility of teaching error, if they continue in the guidance thereof, and err not from the Spirit of Christ as some Churches did, which were as truly Christian, and might lay claim unto Christs promise of preservation out of error, as ever Rome could do, and yet six of the Seven Churches of Asia were reprov'd by the Spirit of Christ, some of them for holding gross error, and some for suffering it; but where was the fault, did not Christ perform his promise to his Church, or to these and other particular Churches? as *Corinth* and *Galatia*? (yes) but there was an erring from the spirit; but all that R. E. goes about is to prove (which he will never be able to do) that Christ is bound by promise to make it good to them that he hath once promised unto, though they perform nothing of their part in taking heed to his direction, and thus would limit the Lord, and let men go free without obedience to his commands; and he cites *Mat. 28. 20.* how the promise of Christ was, and so I am always with you even to the end of the World; but he hath done as the Devil did, when he brought it is written, to Christ, & left out half the words, so R. E. hath

bath left out the *Conditions* on the Disciples part, and that which was their duty, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you, & then loe I am with you, &c. But R. E. likes not obedience it seems unto Christs commands, and yet he will needs be a sharer in the promise, and of the Power that was given, and bind God unto that, and he and his Church to be loose, to do and to teach what they will; but as to all the Scriptures he hath brought and minced them, and cut them in peece meale; and all the Inferences he makes, this we acknowledge without multiplicity of words, that whatsoever was promised to the Church of Christ, and the Disciples of Christ; As the Church of Christ, and Disciples of Christ, the same promise of Christ, doth belong to the Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ in every age, and stands upon the same condition; viz. obedience unto his will, and that they still do teach and no other thing but what he commands them, then he is with them according to his promise; but let not R. E. nor his Roman Catholicks look if they teach things repugnant to his mind and contrary to his will, and press upon others to believe that which Christ hath never taught, that then the promise of God will be so intailed to them as that they cannot err, and here the deceit of thine and your hearts hath led you aside, and this is one of the cunning sleights of men, and craftiness whereby you lay in wait to deceive; and by this you have deceived many; because God hath made such large promises unto his Church, how that they should be led into all truth, and preserved out of error, and you are their successors and must needs inherit this promise by way of intail, and you cannot err, you cannot be deceived, because the Apostles was infallible, therefore you must needs be infallible; though you err and go aside never so much from the infallible spirit, the true guide and judge of, and in the Church of God, as though you had been born to infallibility and the spirit of truth had come by succession; but the inward Light which thou scoffes at, and the spirit of truth which thou calls a private spirit often, hath discovered you and your spirit, though thou boast of fifteen ages that your Doctrine hath been held by the Pastours and Teachers in your visible Church as in the 57. page of thy Epistle; suppose I should grant the fifteen hundred years, which I neither can nor will but I will lead thee to the sixteen hundred years and try thee and your Doctrine that you have held this fifteen hundred year, if it

be so as thou saith; but this thou likes not, but seeing thou pleads antiquity let us come on and joine issue, prove us Transubstantiation in the first *hundred year*, nay I will give thee five hundred more, and if I gave thee five more thou would hardly prove it; before the Council of *Trent* prove us the Doctrine of Purgatory in the first hundred year, and if thou take two, it shall not offend me; prove us the forbidding of Ministers to marry in the first hundred year, and abstinence from Meats, as though they were unclean which are created by God for the use of Believers; prove us that Man hath a twofold right to the Kingdom of Heaven, as your great *Bellarmino* saith, the one by Christ, the other by a Mans own works; prove us Invocation of Angels, and prayer and Sacrifice for the Dead the *first hundred year after Christ*; prove us their selling of Pardons in Christs and the Apostles days for Money; prove us setting up of Images as to put Men in mind of the Saints deceased, and of their Works; prove us Baptism of Infants with Cream and Spittle, and signing with the Cross, and Godfathers and Godmothers; and let us have some example beyond bare report, for we dare not relie upon your infallible spirit in these things, therefore convince us, for we are gain-sayers, and upon good ground, and we do look upon all these Doctrines and many more not to be of such a great age as thou tells on, neither to have any affinity or congruaty, with the Church of Christ in his or the Apostles time nor sundry years after, but rather look upon them as Doctrines of Devils, and a very novelty; a further Scripture R. E. urges, 1 Tim. 3. 15. *the Church of the living God the pillar and ground of truth*; and may we not relie of that pillar that God hath erected for us saith he, and he that hears you hears me, and go teach all Nations, and lo I am with you always, and yet if after all these promises if the Church may not be believed except she teacheth according to the Scriptures, and be only infallible but when she doth her duty, then the Church hath no more privilege then the Devil hath, for so long as he teaches conformable to the Scripture he may be believed, and so long as he teaches truth he may be believed saith R. E. in page the 58, 59.

*Ans.* The Church is in God, 1 Thes. 1. *and is the pillar and ground of truth*; she is in the world though not of the world; and though the members thereof be visible in the world, yet the world that lies in wickedness, never owned them as such, neither saw

saw the glory of this Church but always persecuted it, and was so far from owning it as rule and judge, as it altogether gain-sayed its direction, but they that did believe in the word of life, and were separated from the world, and hated by it, were willing to hear the Council and to receive the instruction of the Church of God, and the Church only medled with their own Members as in matter of Judgment and not of the world, further then by preaching repentance in it; for the Apostle saith, *what have we to do to judge them that are without*; and this Church as in God was secure to rely upon, for she had the Oracles of God committed unto her, and every one may rely upon this pillar if they dare trust it, which I see R. E. dare not because he likes not to be tyed to their Doctrine declared of in the Scriptures, but would have all to take what they say for granted without the Scripture, or the Apostles example or spirit, and is not this unreasonable in thee, that would have the Church to be believed, or that which calls it self so by name, when she teacheth not conformable to Scriptures and to the faith which was once delivered among the Saints, and would thou have a Church reckoned infallible and to be believed when she doth not her duty; the Churches privileges is in speaking truth and judging righteously, and the Devil was a lyer from the beginning and is out of the truth; and where hath thou read that he teaches conformable to Scripture, and so may be believed, is not the promise of God to his Disciples, *as they continued to the end, and as they kept his Commandements*; and were they not known to be the Church of God and Disciples of Christ by this, and was not the promise to them that hungered and thirsted after Righteousness, and to them that did overcome, and was not the exhortation to the Church of Philadelphia, *hold fast that which thou hast that none take thy Crown*, Rev. 3. 11, 12. Was there not a possibility of letting go that which they had, and of loosing the Crown, or else why is the exhortation? But I see R. E. would lay claim to promises and privileges without all condition, and will not be tyed to keep the commands of Christ, nor would not have the Church tyed to follow the Doctrine of the Primitive Church; nor will not admit of any possibility or probability of failing or erring, nay not so much as a mistake; but as to infallibility and certainty I have said enough before, and the confidence or rather the impudence of R. E. is easily seen, and to make up all, he concludes the Apostles

as Men were subject to error in their private affaires, yet were they by the assistance of Gods Spirit infallible in delivering matters of faith, I say as they were assisted by the holy Spirit of God they neither erred in private affaires nor matters of faith, but as they were not assisted by this they were subject to err, for in this stood their only ability to teach, instruct, exhort, and judge, and as they were guided by this Spirit, they were infallible; and so R. E. saith that the Prelats of the holy Catholick Church as Men they are fallible in their own private actions and affairs; yet when they are assembled in a general Council with their supream Pastor they are still made infallible in determining matters of Faith: It is well that R. E. will grant that there is any possibility for their Prelats to fail either publick or private; but I say he that is not faithful in his own actions and affaires, can never be faithful in the Lords; but it seems a General Council cannot fail when the supream Pastor the Pope is there, but if he be not it seems by R. E's discourse, it is more doubtful: the like he also judges if the eleven Disciples and the seventy too, with the Brethren and Elders, if they had all been to define matters of Faith if Peter had been wanting, which this Catholick Church calls the Prince of the Apostles, there had been some doubt of their infallibility in point of faith; as though the promise of God and the Spirit of God had not been with the rest of the Apostles as well as Peter: but a word or two and more hereafter of the infallibility of General Councils, the Nicean Council decreed flat Idolatry about Worshipping of Images, the Council at Constantinople condemned their Proceedings, and made void their Decrees, yet both these in R. E's account must needs be infallible; the Council at Basil as Albertus Pighius saith decreed against all reason and against Scriptures (the Council of Calcedon) which was one of the four that Gregory the great compares to the four Gospels, that their Decrees were as certain and infallible; yet Pope Leo did not stick to condemn it, and all them as unadvised; Stephanus Bishop of Rome made void the Decrees of Formosus; and Sabinian the Pope commanded that Pope Gregory's Mass and all his Writings should be burned; Leo the fourth abrogated and made void the Acts of Adrian; the Basil Council determined that the Council of Bishops was above the Pope, but the Latterine Council under Leo determined that the Pope was above the Council; and they decreed also that he that should think otherwise should be held



held for a *Heretick*; but the Council of *Basil* aforefaid decreed that they that judged that the Council was not above the *Pope* they were *Hereticks*: Innumerable more instances I might give but that I will not trouble my Reader with fuch unprofitable ftories; and all thefe *Popes* faid, they were *Peters* Succellors, and had the keys of binding and loofing, and all thefe Councils and many more which were of the *Roman* faith which in *R. E.*'s account could not err but muft needs be infallible, and yet are as contradictory one to another as light is to darknefs, and black to white, and looks with their faces feveral ways like *Samfons* Foxes; and therefore let not *R. E.* nor none of his Catholicks think that the Church of *Chrift* now coming out of the *Wildernefs* again, can receive all their contradictory Decrees, and invented fopperies and confutations of Men for infallible; the day is broken, the light hath taken hold of the ends of the Earth, the Sun is rifen which fhall make all the foggy mifts of darknefs and clouds of ignorance to fly away.

But *R. E.* ceafes not here, but heapes up one peece of darknefs upon another till blacknefs of darknefs appear, and he tells of a vifible Church, *Mat. 16.* which is builded upon *Peter* that vifible Rock, for that Rock there fpoken of is not *Chrift*, faith he, but *Peter*, for immediately after he names *Peter*, whereas faith he, if he had meant himfelf or *Peters* confellion, for that faith he is too remote or mediate and antecedent, for if *Chrift* had meant himfelf or *Peters* confellion, he fhould have fpoken according to the Grammer Rule and Conffruction, *Upon that Rock, or upon this Rock I have build, I do build, and not I will build,* in the 63. page and in the 64. page, he tells of a Church vifible having two heads of an *Independent Head*, and a *Dependent Head*; and in the 66. page he faith, he hopes that it will appear clear to all, as it did to him, that the vifible Church is that Rule and Judge appointed by God, and all upon pain of damnation are to fubmit unto it.

Where *R. E.* hath read of a vifible Church with two heads I know not, and to take it for infallible I intend not; and where is *Peter* called a vifible Rock, and the chief Paftor among the Apoftles; doth not this contradict Scripture, doth not *Chrift* fay, *the Gentiles exercise Dominion one over another, but it fhall not be fo amongft you, he that will be greateft among you let him be your fervant, and he that will be chief let him be your Minifter*; and as for thy vifible and militant

militant Church we read no such words in the Scriptures of truth, we read of a Church of God and of the first born, whereof *Christ was the Rock and the foundation, and another foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 11. and Paul saith in the 10. ver. as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation. I hope R. E. will not be so impudent as to say he had laid Peter or that he had preached up Peter to believe in for the remission of sins; nor for the foundation of faith, for that had been contrary to the Apostles commission and their Doctrine; for saith the Apostle, We have not preached our selves but Christ the Lord, and our selves your servants for his sake. And I may say to thee R. E. as Paul said to the Corinthians when they were striving about Men, 1 Cor. 3. 21. therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours; or as he saith in the 1. chap. 13. ver. was Paul crucified for you, or were you baptised in the name of Paul; were they not carnal that so gloried, was Peter crucified for us; or were we baptised in the name of Peter, is not your visible Church carnal who thus judges that Christ intended Peter to be the foundation of his Church, for what was he or the rest of the Apostles, but Ministers by which many believed; and if thou had been present, it is very like would have instructed Christ what to have said, and bidden him have spoken after the Grammar Rule and Construction upon that Rock I will build my Church; for Peter's faith in Christ is to mediate it seems, and his confession too remote and antecedent, to be the Rock, meant in the 16. of Mat. 18. and therefore Peter must be immediate, and the Rock upon which Christ hath, doth, and will build his Church, but as immediate as he was; and as sure a Rock as he was, when he began to rebuke Christ he turned him about ver. 23. and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me Satan thou art an offence unto me, for thou savours not the things of God; and so say I to R. E. and his Catholics, they savour not the things of God, but it is thy private spirit and your own Interpretations and not the mind of Christ; and how far antecedent is Peter's Confession of Christ the Son of the Living God; is it not in the 16. ver. and wherein was Peter blessed but in this, that it was revealed to him that Christ was the Son of the Living God, the Rock of Ages, and the foundation of his Church; and as for thy visible Church with its two heads, independent head; and dependent head, which sure must have two bodies where they can be found, but that I shall leave to R. E. and I hope from*

from the grounds that thou hast here laid which did appear to clear to thee, that none will be afraid nor judge, that such a visible Church with two heads is to be rule and guide to all to whom all is to submit under pain of Damnation, which is to have Peter for its Rock, which if he had been living he would have denyed you all, as setters up of Men and sleighters of Jesus Christ the Rock of Ages, the Foundation of the Church, the Head of the Body, the Rule of Life, the Judge of quick and the dead, the Law-giver, director, instructor, and preserver of his Church for ever; but R. E. goes on and saith, it only remains that we consider which among all these congregations now on Earth, which pretend themselves to be this Church of Christ, for having once found her and knowing that she is so assisted with the Holy Ghost that she cannot teach us an error, we shall no more dispute the verity of her Doctrines, then we would have questioned the Articles of Faith taught by the holy Apostles or the words of Christ himself, wherefore if this Church this infallible guide shall teach us that Infants ought to be Baptised, and that it is as lawfull to desire the Saints departed to pray for us as to desire the Prayers of them that are alive, and that the body of Christ our Saviour is really and truly present in the Sacrament of the Alter, or any other article of Faith we shall no more doubt it, then the first Christians did the verity of what the Apostles taught them.

Among all those Congregations on Earth that looks upon themselves to be this Church and spouse of Christ, there is one if thy eye could behold, or if thou could discern it, but before thou can, there is an eye in thee must be put out, and there is a wisdom in thee that must be confounded and turned into foolishness, before thou can discern it in its glory as it is, but however that is it undoubtedly, which is begotten into the faith through the publication of the immortal word of Life, & who are translated from death unto life, & who have received the power and spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, and meets in his name and power, and doth witness his presence among them, and have received a measure of that infallible Spirit of truth which leadeth into all truth, and out of the pollutions of the World, and are dead unto the World, and baptised into the sufferings of Christ, and are crucified with him, who keep unviolated his Statutes and commands, without adding to or diminishing from, who walk in the order of the Gospel, and are not conformable to the world, nor to that which fallen men

men sets up, but to the power of God which worketh in the hearts of all that believe, to the framing of them a meet habitation for God to dwell in, and abideth in the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, and are sayers and doers, speaks the truth and doth the truth, and holds the truth in Righteousness, and the faith once delivered to the Saints in a pure heart, and a pure Conscience, who prays in the spirit, and with understanding, who publisheth the truth, and declares it in the spirit reaching to the Consciences, and to the witness of God in all that bears, who rejoyce only in Christ Jesus the great power of God, and the wisdom of God, and hath no confidence in the flesh, nor fleshly performances, whose faith stands not in words but in the mighty power of God, which she hath received according unto the promise of God, this Congregation or Congregations which is one, and doth hold the one head by which all the members of Christ are knit together in the one faith, by which they overcome the world; this undoubtedly is the Church of Christ and the spouse of Christ. But whether R. E. will not dispute against the verity of her Doctrine I question; notwithstanding all his submission in words, and if this Church should teach that Infants are to be baptised with Cream and Spittle, and signed with the Cross as absolutely necessary to Salvation, or that it is the duty of the Saints alive, to pray to the Saints departed this world, or to teach that Christs body which was broken for us and hanged upon the tree at Mount Calvary, that this should now be in a morsel of bread and a cup of wine, and conveyed thither by the Priest, and this to be really the body of Christ, if this Church should teach any such Doctrine there were good and weighty reason to question, seeing that R. E. before hath said that they cannot be infallible who contradict one another and teach two contrary Doctrines, and yet say, they are both infallibly directed so to teach, I hope R. E. will grant that the Church in Christs time and the Apostles was infallible, and it taught no such Doctrine, but to the contrary, therefore that Church which pretends infallibility, and yet teacheth such Doctrines as before mentioned contrary unto Christ and the Apostles cannot be infallible, neither led by the infallible Spirit, and all hath good reason to question the verity of these things, more then what the Apostles taught, seeing they are contradictory to Christ and the Apostles teaching, and contrary to Scripture, and contrary to the witness of God in all Consciences, and as I said before, this Church of God whereof I have spoken now, though  
not

not denominated by any other name then the *Church of God*, is and hath been assisted so by the *Holy Ghost* as she hath not erred, when she *only bearkened to its instruction and direction*; but when the wisdom of the flesh, and the worldly part and *States*, and *Governments*, and *Policies*, and *Princes* have been minded more then the *Spirit of God*, then error hath been taught, and the greater part in a Council have overswayed the rest, and established error by decree, and hath enjoined it under penalties to be received as *sacred and holy, and infallible*, of which we find the Church of Rome exceeding guilty, and therefore do conclude notwithstanding the promise of God to his Church that kept in Covenant with him, that this Church of Rome have erred and do err, both in *faith, doctrine, and practice of the infallible Church in the Apostles days*; and therefore their Doctrine is more to be questioned then the Apostles, and they not fit to be this rule and guide, and director; unto which R. E. faith, all is to submit under pain of Damnation; Scar-Crows will hardly affright men of understanding, but unreasonable Creatures it may. And last of all R. E. he faith, he will conclude his whole proof with an argument from Heaven, and of the highest nature, and makes it evident that the *Roman Church* must be this guide and judge, which God hath appointed, because of the gift of Miracles; and cites the 15. of *John* and 24. If I had not done among them the works that no other man did they had not had sin, and now, I say, that the *Roman Church* hath done works and Miracles such as no other Church hath done, therefore if we refuse to believe her we shall have sin and shew our selves haters of God; and he instances *St. Ber. St. Mal. St. Dom. St. Fra.* which wrought Miracles; and of *Austin* the Monk which taught Christian Faith first in *England*, and his fellow Monkes which was then confirmed by wonderful Miracles from Heaven, not in confirmation of those points and articles of faith which you hold with us but of those which you call *Poppish* and *superstitious*, as the Sacrifice of the Mass, and about respect and veneration which is given to *Saints Relicks* and *Images*, and about the Doctrine of *Purgatory*, and payment of *Tythes*, and R. E. concludes if we will not believe what you have not seen, you destroy faith which is an evidence of things not seen.

Although R. E. make a great boast of the Miracles of the Church of Rome, which no other Church hath wrought the like,

H

and

and therefore concludes that *he is this rule and guide, unto which all is to give ear unto, under pain of Damnation; and these Miracles he saith is argument from Heaven, and proof of the highest nature, believe him who can; if time would but permit, and the Reader have patience to read most or many, if not all the Miracles he so much crys up might be declared to his and their shame the very report and relation thereof cannot but be reckoned as fabulous and fained stories, and proceeds from that lying spirit which was in the false prophet which wrought Miracles before the Beast, and deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his Image which must be taken alive and cast into the lake of fire, Revelation 19. 20. It is an a adulterous Generation that seeks a signe. And yet did not believe when they had Miracles wrought by the finger of God amongst them, yet they said it was by Belzebub; the Scribes and Pharisees said, if he be the King of Israel let him come down from the Cross and we will believe; but the power of Christ was not to be shewed at the blind will of the Pharisees, neither would they have believed if he had come down, though Miracles have been wrought by the power of God, and is according to his Heavenly will, and is not limited either to men, time or place, yet it is not so sufficient an argument from Heaven as R. E. saith to prove the Church of Rome this true Church, seeing that the Devil and Satan, and Antichrist shall come with signes and lying wonders, and if it were possible deceive the elect; and Janes and Jambres withstood Moses in working lying Miracles before Pharoah to the hardning of his heart: and Chrysostome in his Hom. upon Mat. 49. saith in the end of time power shall be given to the Devil to work signes and Miracles; so that the Ministers of Christs cannot be known by working of Miracles, but by working none at all: and Augustine saith, though some said Prayers at the Tombs of the Dead and obtained their desires as they said, saith, away with these things, they be either jugglings and mockeries of deceitful men, or else delusions of lying spirits, Chrys. in his Hom. upon Math. 49. in old times it was known by Miracle who were the true Christians, and who the false; but now Miracles is rather among them that are false Christians, and as for your great Miracles which thou saith the Chronologies and Histories speak of *J. L. as Bed. and Holm, Sheads, Storms*, and others, we look upon them not at all as Material in this thing, seeing they have had the reports from other hands and Pens of certain Monkish stories which they have found scattered*



scattered here and there published themselves, and lest their fables upon record to deceive poor people withal for their own advantage, and most of the Miracles that we hear of, is either wrought about your Tombes and Sepulchres, and your holy Mass, and your Relicks and Images; I have heard of indeed how that from the skirt of an Image of yours, one in a *Bloody Flux* did but touch, and immediately vertue came from it, and water and blood issued forth, wherby the party was made whole by washing therein; also I have heard of the Image of the Virgin Mary, first honored by Christians in *Nazareth*, after wards translated into *Slavonia*, & when Images began to be villified there and disesteemed, it removed it self from place to place, as discontent did arise in it, it seems at the place and people where it was situated sometimes, and at last it removed a whole Island with it nearer *Rome*, now call'd *Loretta*, and commonly known by the name of our Lady of *Laretta*, to which all the *Pilgrims* and *Monks* commonly and frequently go to confess their sins, and to receive *Absolutions* before they came to *Rome*, and so continues to this day. I cannot forget indeed the notable Miracle wrought by *Austin* the Monk of which R. E. glories so in, wrought at *Cometon* in *Oxfordshire*, touching the Doctrine of due payment of Tythes, a profitable Doctrine to *Austin* and his *Monks*, the first *Bishop of Canterbury* confirmed by a Miracle, and such as it is you shall have it; About the year 600. as it is said, *Austin* comes to preach at *Cometon* in *Oxfordshire*, the Priest of the place complains to him, how that the Lord of the Manner would not pay his Tythes; *Austin* questioning the Lord about the fault in his Devotion; he stoutly answered, that the tenth sheaf doubtless was his, that had the Intrest in the 9th. and therefore would pay none: presently *Austin* denounces him excommunicate, and turning to the Altar to say Mass publicly, forbad that any excommunicated person should be present there; suddenly a dead Corps that had been buried at Church door arose, and went out of the Church, and stood while the Mass continued; which ended, *Austin* comes to this living or dead whether you will, and charges him in the name of God to declare who he was, he tells him, that in the time of the Brittainish state, *hujus villi Patteronus*; and although he had often urged by the Doctrine of the Priest to pay his Tythes yet he never could be brought to it, for the which after he was dead he saith, was carried to Hell: *Austin* desired to know where the Priest that excommunicated him was buried? this dead shewed him the place,

where he makes an Invocation of the dead Priest, and bids him arise, because they wanted his help, the Priest rises; Austin asks him if he knew that other that was risen? he tells him yes, but wishes he had never known him; for saith he, he was in all things ever adverse to the Church, and a detainer of his Tythes, a great sinner to his death, and therefore I excommunicated him: But Austin declares that it was fit mercy should be used towards him, and that he had suffered long in Hell for his offence; you must suppose the Author meant Purgatory: wherefore he gives him an Absolution, & sends him to his grave; where he fell again to dust and ashes; he gone, the Priest now risen tells that his Corps had lyen there about 170. years, and Austin would gladly have had him to have continued on earth again, for instruction of souls, but could not thereto intreat him; so he also returns to his former lodging: the Lord of the Town standing by all this while, and trembling, was now demanded if he would pay his Tythes, but he presently fell down at Austin's feet weeping and confessing his offence and submits to pay Tythes, and receives pardon, and became all his life time a follower of Austin. Besides the common Legend of our Saints it is in some Volumes put alone for a most observable Miracle, and it is found to be bound up at the end of the Ms. Life of *Tho. Becket*, Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, written by *John Degrandesono*, and it remains in the publick Library of Oxford; there also it is related in *Johannes Anglicus his History Aurea*, besides *Selden* in his *History of Tythes* makes mention of it, and in the 274. page of his Book. And as concerning the Miracles which is reported by certain *Jesuits*, which was done in the *West-Indies* by them of that Society, after they had converted to the Christian faith as they call it, in confirmation of their Doctrine, they write of great Miracles that was wrought by them, how that with holy water they had calmed the Sea in great tempests; and with holy water they had driven Mice out of the Country; and how that by holy water they had made barren Women to bear Children: See *Copes Dialogue* the first, page the 18.

And many devised and fained Miracles is storied among you, and kept up to deceive and blind the people withal; dead Images have been forced to sweat, to weep, to laugh, and to shift themselves from place to place; and as among the *Pamins* and *Infidels* the Image of *Jupiter* was able by art to cry aloud let all Christians be banished the Country, *Enseb. lib. 8.* Even so among the false Christians, Images

Images have been able to speak whatsoever his Keeper or Sexton listeth; and the Image of our Lady hath been able to attend her own Candle, and other Images hath been able to heal all Diseases; believe it who can. *Nicholaus* saith, in the Church of God the Priests often times deceive the people with fained Miracles for *Lucres* sake; and thus the World hath been borne in hand, that Images were not only bare Images but had some secret devine power hidden within them; but I shall conclude and say as *Hirone* saith, the truth of Christ shall devour and consume the falshood of Antichrist, and all his fained Miracles and lying wonders, and enchantments, and sorceries, with which he hath deceived the Nations: *Alexander Hales* saith, p. 4. qua. 53. men. the 4. in the Sacrament it self there appears flesh, sometime by the conveyance of men, and sometime by the working of the Devil. And hath not R. E. heard or read of a certain Catholick of theirs, and no Lay-man neither, not many ages ago that did penance at *Pauls Cross*, and made a publick confession of his dissimulation, when he pricked his finger and made it bleed when he gave that which youcall your Eucharist (or sacrament of the Alter as you call it) unto the people to delude them, making them believe that as the phrase is, Christ by Miracle had conveyed his blood into the bread after the words of Consecration; but enough of this hath been said by others, and written largely of by other hands and pens, so that I need not say much: But Miracles be not evermore undoubted proofes of a true Doctrine, nor such absolute signes of a true Church, nor such infallible arguments as from Heaven as R. E. saith his is; and so I shall conclude with that which *Austin* said unto *Faustus* the Manicha, Ye work no Miracles, and yet if ye wrought any at your hands, we would take heed of them; and *Jer. 23.* saith, the false Prophets have deceived my people by their lies, and by their lightness, and by their dreams and Miracles. And so hath this false fained pretended Catholick Church done, deceived the Nations, and bewitched them with such lying fabulous stories, and false and ridiculous miracles, and sorceries, and enchantments, as is above mentioned, and many more of the like nature might be mentioned, but that I would not be tedious to the Reader, which if they were summed up all would hardly make up a Heavenly argument and proof, as R. E. saith it doth; that their Church is the only true Church, and fit to be the rule and judge of all matters of faith; and now Reader view over their Miracles before

before mentioned, and see if thou can receive them, because the Church of Rome saith they are true, and must not be questioned, for if thou do, thou art like to come under a hard censure by the verdict of R. E. and his Catholick Church; first to be reckoned as an *unbeliever*, secondly to be a *bater of God*, and thirdly in not believing these Miracles, or whatsoever else shall be declared unto thee by the said Church, or else thou comes under no less penalty then *eternal damnation*; as R. E. saith in the 80. page of his Epistle: but it is a small thing to be judged by man, and especially such a man, who hath gaded abroad and changed his way so oft, so that he hath forgotten the true path of Righteousness to walk in, or else never knew it, and hath turned and wheeled about; and now at last doth as the poor *Indian* doth with his Deer skin, hangs it upon one shoulder and so upon the other shoulder to shelter him from the wind and tempest that comes of that side: But the day is dawning, and mens spirits are discovered beyond their words, and all the turnings and wheelings of things upside down, is but as the Potters Clay, for God measures every man, not by his words but by his heart and spirit, and works, and will judge every one in Righteousness according to their deeds.

And R. E. goes on as confident that his arguments and reasons laid down hath prevailed, and almost takes it for granted that it must needs be evident to all, that the *Roman Church* is the true Church; and saith, he knows but one single point between the Catholicks and them that stand divided from them, and that is, saith he, that we follow a several rule, to guide and judge in the great affaires of faith, for all sides are bound to believe all truths, sufficiently propounded to them, to be revealed of God; and therefore if the presence of Christ in the Sacrament, Purgatory, worshipping of Images, Invocation of Saints, and prayer to the Dead, and for the Dead, if these or any other point of faith be sufficiently propounded, by denying them Gods varassaty is denied, and God thereby made a lyer. The difference stands betwixt you and them that are divided from you, in more particulars then thou art aware of, or ever will be able sufficiently to propound them to be revealed of God, though it is true some are but divided from you in Circumstantials and Ceremonies, and some others in some points of Faith and Worship, yet some deny you in the very ground; though 'tis true the different rule by which

157  
which each party are directed is a great and a main thing; thou  
saith this Church Catholick is the rule; but I say, and am not a-  
lone, that Christ is the way to the Father, and the way to the  
Kingdom, and the rule and means by which his Church is govern-  
ed, and he is the Lawgiver and the judge, and all Judgment is  
committed to the Son, and it is he alone that *propounds truth suf-  
ficiently*; and they that are in him are *new Creatures*; and that  
which is the *new Creatures rule, guide and judge*, is the rule, guide  
and judge of the Church of God, and Christ is the author of faith,  
and it is nothing that avails any thing with God, but the *new  
Creature*; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace is to them,  
Gal. 3. 16. and Christ hath not left his people without guide, for  
he said, *lo I am with you to the end of the world*. So as to commit  
the guidance thereof to fallible men, who may assume authority  
without his power, and to fasten those things upon God as to be  
revealed from him, when the Lord hath spoken nothing; and we  
are so far from looking that the main grounds that thou lays down  
to prove your Church to be this rule and guide, and the many  
Doctrines propounded by you are not *sufficiently propounded* to  
be revealed of God, but rather they are the imaginations of your  
own brain, and things packt up since the Apostles days by differ-  
ent Popes, and different *mutations and alterations* in your Church,  
for filthy Lucre sake; and so to deny them is not to deny Gods  
*verassty*, neither to make God a lyer as thou falsly saith; but  
thou and you are the lyers, as to propound those things to be re-  
vealed from God and to be received by all under pain of *damna-  
tion*, when God hath revealed no such thing, but the contrary, and  
so thy own words at last shall turn to be thy burden, because thou  
saith, the Lord saith, and hath *revealed and sufficiently preposed*, the  
real presence of Christ in your Sacrament of the Alter as a devine  
Revelation, worshipping of Images, Prayer to the Dead, and  
for the Dead, and all the foolish imagination which you have  
brought in, and intruded and thrust upon people by force; and  
these are *sufficiently propounded* as thou saith, as *devine Revelations*,  
and the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or the Incarnation of Christ;  
silence deceit, and for shame blush so to say, the *Prophets* who  
spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost and prophesied of  
things to come, they declared of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*  
all, and prophesied long before that *a Virgin should bring forth a*

Son

Son, whose name should be called Emanuel, God with us, and the Government should be upon his Shoulders: this the Pope hath usurped, and you put it upon his Shoulders; but your invented Doctrines aforesaid are meerly the imaginations of your own brain, which neither the Prophets nor Apostles bore witness unto but against, and therefore it is thy and your great presumption, to make God, Christ and Apostles the foundation of all this rubbish, straw, and stubble, which thou would put off as devine revelation and as sufficiently proposed as the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles was; nay blush for shame; they brought in the Prophets for the peoples sake, to prove that they had testified of the same before, and had declared the coming of the just one; besides they commended themselves to the witness of God in every mans conscience; and upon waiting upon the Lord and in the measure of his spirit, they found the things even so, and by searching the Scripture as the Eareans did, and found the things even so as had been declared of; but upon due consideration we find not these foresaid Doctrines so propounded as to have the Testimony of the Prophets and Apostles, neither doth your Doctrine and worship answer the Witness of God in every Man's Conscience, and so to deny you is not to make God a lyer, but God true, the Prophets and Apostles, and the witness of God true, (and you lyers) who contradicts them and their Testimony, and the power of God, and would assume it to your selves, though you be erred from the spirit and would put all under the name of infallibility, and by such heavenly arguments as R. E. calls them, to wit, the Miracles aforesaid, by which you have deceived the Nations, and blinded the eyes of the people; but the time is come, and Light and Life is broken forth that the skirts of the Whore must be discovered, and her nakedness must appear, and her fornications and adulteries shall be manifest unto all so that you shall not proceed much further: And I hope by this time in R. E's words it will appear evident to all, whose eyes God in any measure hath opened that this Catholick Church (so called) is manifest in what hath been said to R. E. not to be the Church of Christ, neither their Doctrines and practice devinely propounded, neither she taken from henceforth as the only infallible judge, rule and director in all matters of faith, which all are to receive upon pain of damnation, as R. E. saith; though she sit as a Queen, and hath known no sorrow; but on the contrary she to be a blind guide that hath



hath bewitched the *Kings* of the Earth, and the *Nations* (which are *waters*, which is the universality *R. E.* boasts of) with her *enchancements* and *soceries*, which from henceforth shall not be taken as *infallible* but *fallible*; and as that Church that hath not conveyed the true faith which was once delivered to the *Saints*, but rather hath spread abroad *error* and false *Doctrine*, and the *traditions* and *inventions* of *Men*, instead of the *Doctrine* of *Christ*, and would put off all this under the name of *Authority* and *power* from God, and *sufficiently propounded*, and *infallibility*, and under the penalty of the highest curse upon not receiving it; but the Sun is risen which hath discovered all your deceit; lay down your carnal weapons, *Cain's* weapons, and your *humane* power by which you have prevailed, more by force and cruelty upon the *Nations*, then by sound *Doctrine*, or that plea of being *Peters* successors: I say, come forth with your spiritual weapons, which the Church of God had in the *Primitive* times, and prevail as far as you can, but oh you want these, and therefore you are necessitated to take up force and violence, the *Dragons* power to compell all to come to your Church.

Further *R. E.* in his Postscript hath been confident of what he hath declared, that it is of such force what he hath said for the *Roman Catholick* Church so called, that he believes what he hath said cannot be answered; and he saith, his confidence doth not *misbecome him*, and that it is improbable to be answered, and that he hath not yet done his *All*; neither in his first nor second Edition, but hath somewhat more yet of great moment to speak as to prove the Church of *Rome* this only and infallible guide.

Unto whom I say it had been good not to have boasted when he put on his armor, but when he puts it off, and methinks having been so unstable and unsetled as he hath been formerly, he should not have been so confident in opposition to Wisdom, as to give such a challenge and make such a vapour of, as that it is *improbable* to be answered, and it is more then *any of you or all of you* can answer, as his own words are, (page the 89.) these words are not becoming a man indeed, who saith, he hath learned meekness and *humility of heart*, and hath such great bowels of Charity, as he professeth he hath; page the 86. The substance of what he hath said or written, which he reckons so profound and unanswerable, and to be more then any or all the *Nonconformists* can answer, they

they have been answered over, and over again, before R. E. was born, by many Learned, sufficient, and good Men; whose Reasons and weighty Arguments about the Premisses have not been made void unto this day, but hath prevailed with many, not only to the *convincing*, but also to the *turning* of many from that usurped Authority of the *Roman* Church, and hath discovered the errors, false Doctrine, and evil practices, notwithstanding their pretended infallibility, which R. E. will not be able to answer if particulars should be descended unto; and though R. E. may reckon the reasons that he hath laid down, which he hath the most what taken at the gainest, and reckon them as impregnable, yet I hope they will not appear so to an understanding eye which is enlightened by the Spirit of the Lord, nor to them who are of a sound Judgment; what others have done to answer his bold Challenge I know not, because I am shut up in a corner for the Testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God: but methinks them that are concerned should not let such boasts go unproved, neither such false Doctrine nor false suggestions as R. E. hath made, to villifie and debase and set at nought all things, and every thing, that seems contrary unto the judgment of this pretended Catholick Church; and seeing that he shuts out all *Nonconformists* as to be Members of the Church of God, and to be without all *Rule*, all *Order*, all *Government*, and to come under the great penalty of *damnation*, by not submitting unto whatsoever this pretended Catholick Church doth impose, how repugnant soever it be unto the Doctrine of Christ, and how contrary soever it be unto the *Spirit of God*, yet all must be received without question, though it be that which the Spirit of God sometimes called the Doctrine of Devils, but now it must become *holy*, and of *divine authority*, and *sufficiently propounded and so received*; because as R. E. saith, this Church cannot err; I say unto him and unto all men, and to the witness of God in every man, either the Church in the Apostles days did *err and teach false Doctrine*, or this pretended Catholick Church, because they teach contrary one to the other, and do walk by a contrary rule; and as R. E. saith, infallibility cannot contradict it self; and he hath granted that the Apostles and Primitive Christians had an *infallible spirit*, and did not err; then let R. E. and all, take a view of the *Roman* Doctrine, and compare it with theirs and they shall find it as far wide one from the other as the *Heavens*

is from *Earth*, or *light* from *darkness*, so that for the truths sake, and for the *Doctrine and faith* sake that was once delivered among the *Saints*, and for the *Nonconformists* sake who cannot bow their knee to *Baal*, neither submit to the injunctions of changable men, instead of the *Doctrines* of *Christ*. I could not do less then give Answer unto the substance of *R. E.* his *Epistle* which he boasted of, to be more then any could answer, and to reprove his false *Doctrine* and error, which he would perswade all unto, and not to question, because the *Church of Rome* hath propounded it as infallible; most of all those *Doctrines* are denied, and I cannot but give my *Testimony* against them as to be false, and that which leads people into *error*; and let *R. E.* when he brings forth his all, prove to us, that *Infallibility* as intailed to the *Pope* by *succession*, and *Prayer for the Dead*, *worshipping* *60 Angels*, *worshipping Relicks*, *worshipping Images*, *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*,  *sprinkling of Infants*; prove to us from the *Scripture* in thy next, that these were *Apostolical* and *Infallible Doctrines*, delivered and taught by the *Church of Christ* in the *Apostles time*, or in the first hundred years after *Christ*, and thou wilt not only gain me, but many more to receive and imbrace the *Catholick Church of Rome* for an absolute rule and guide, unto which all on earth ought to be subjected unto; which if thou do not, we will take it for granted; thou dare not, least thou ingage thy self in such a *Controversie* as thou never ingaged in yet, by which thy and your folly will more and more appear unto all; I shall not trouble neither my self nor the Reader any further in traducing *R. E.* in his multiplicity of words, although the main and weighty Arguments and reasons as *R. E.* looks upon them is answered, which I commend unto thee, and to the witness of *God* in every *Man's Conscience*, to try and search out, where the difference and weight lies, and the truth, and as the measure of *Gods Spirit* in every *Man's Conscience* doth close with or against, if it can what I have said about *R. E.* his *Epistle*, for unto that I dare stand to the judgment of and in it, as every one believes and walks, I bid my Reader, Farewell.

F. H.

*Westmerland this 18. of the  
Fifth Moneth, 1665.*

THE END.



7165